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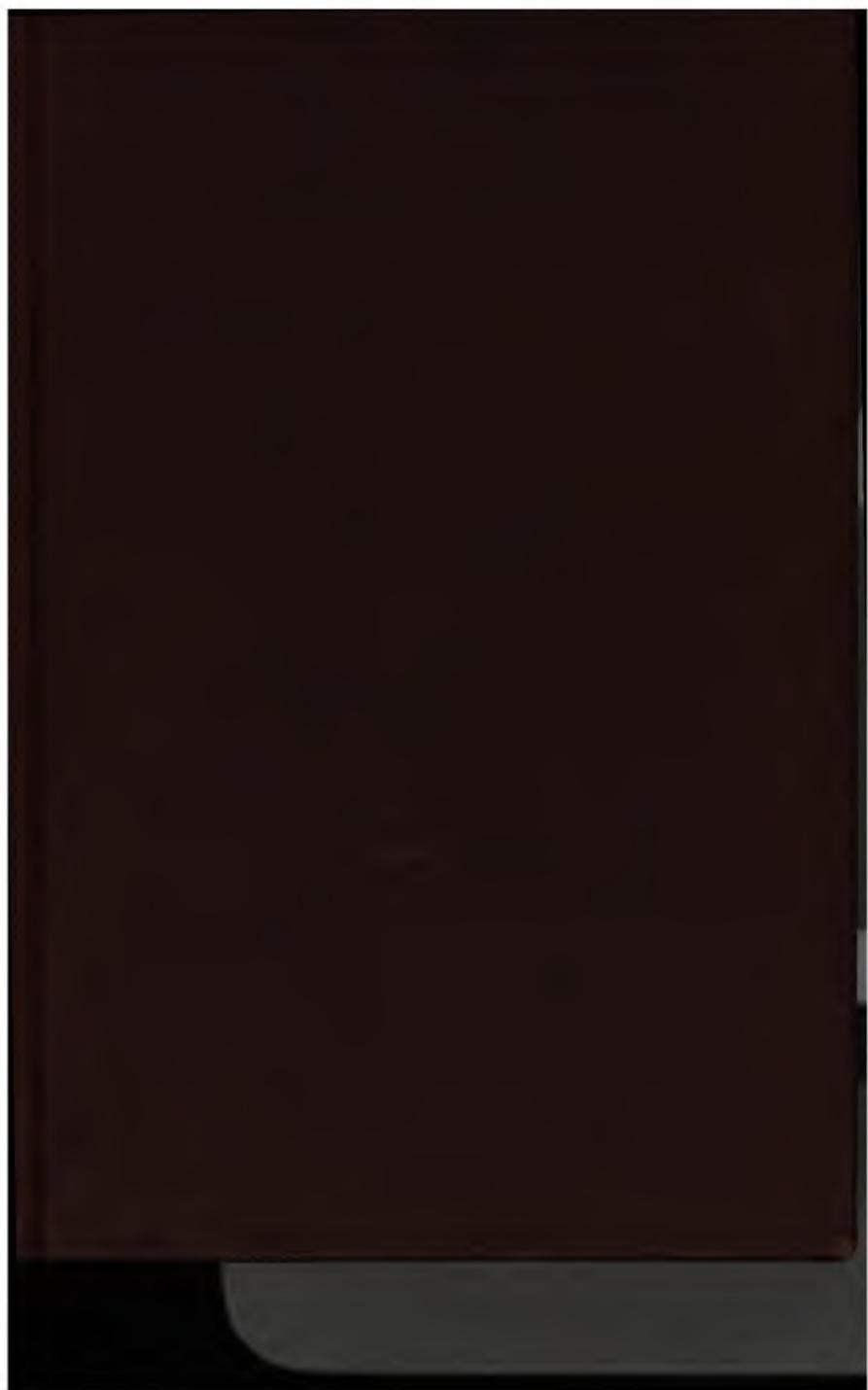
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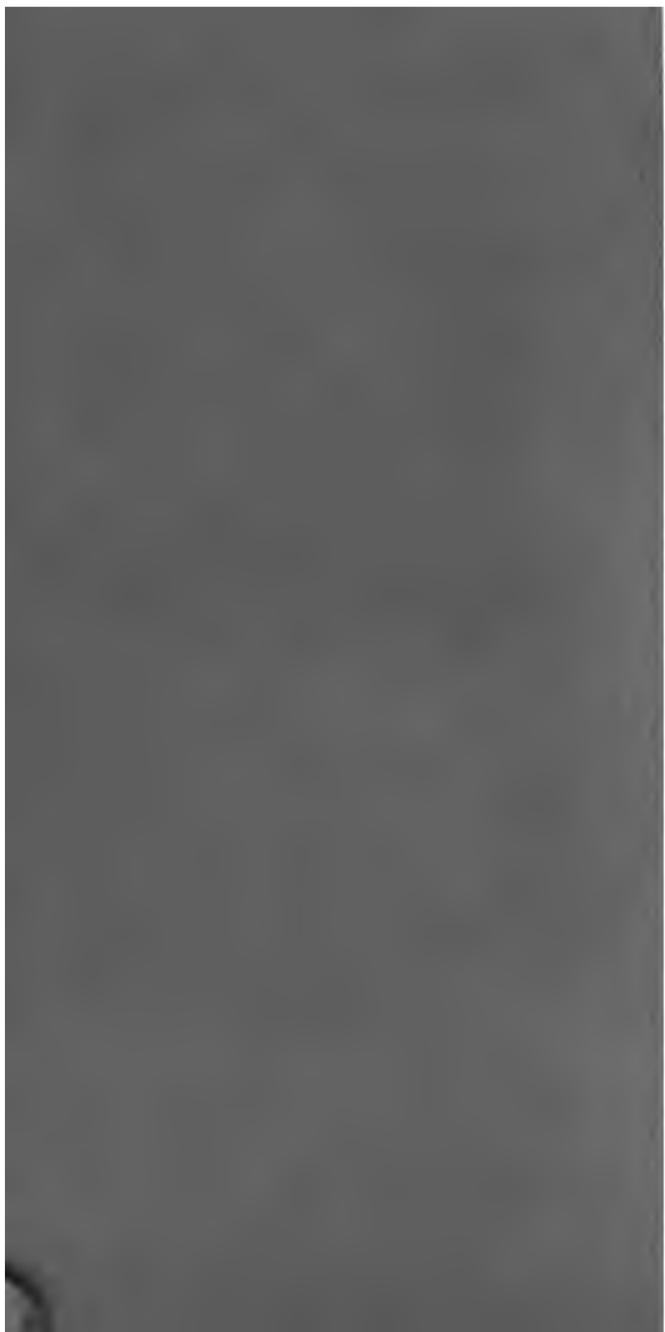
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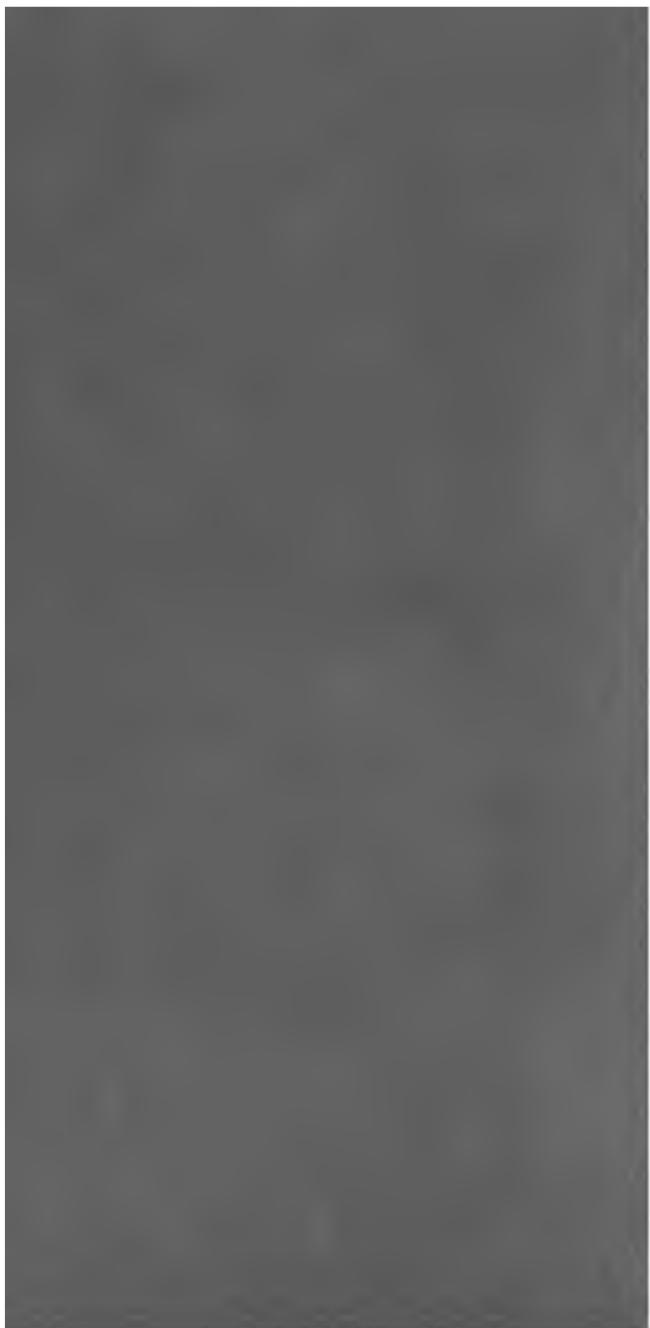
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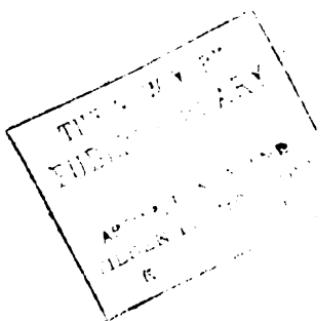


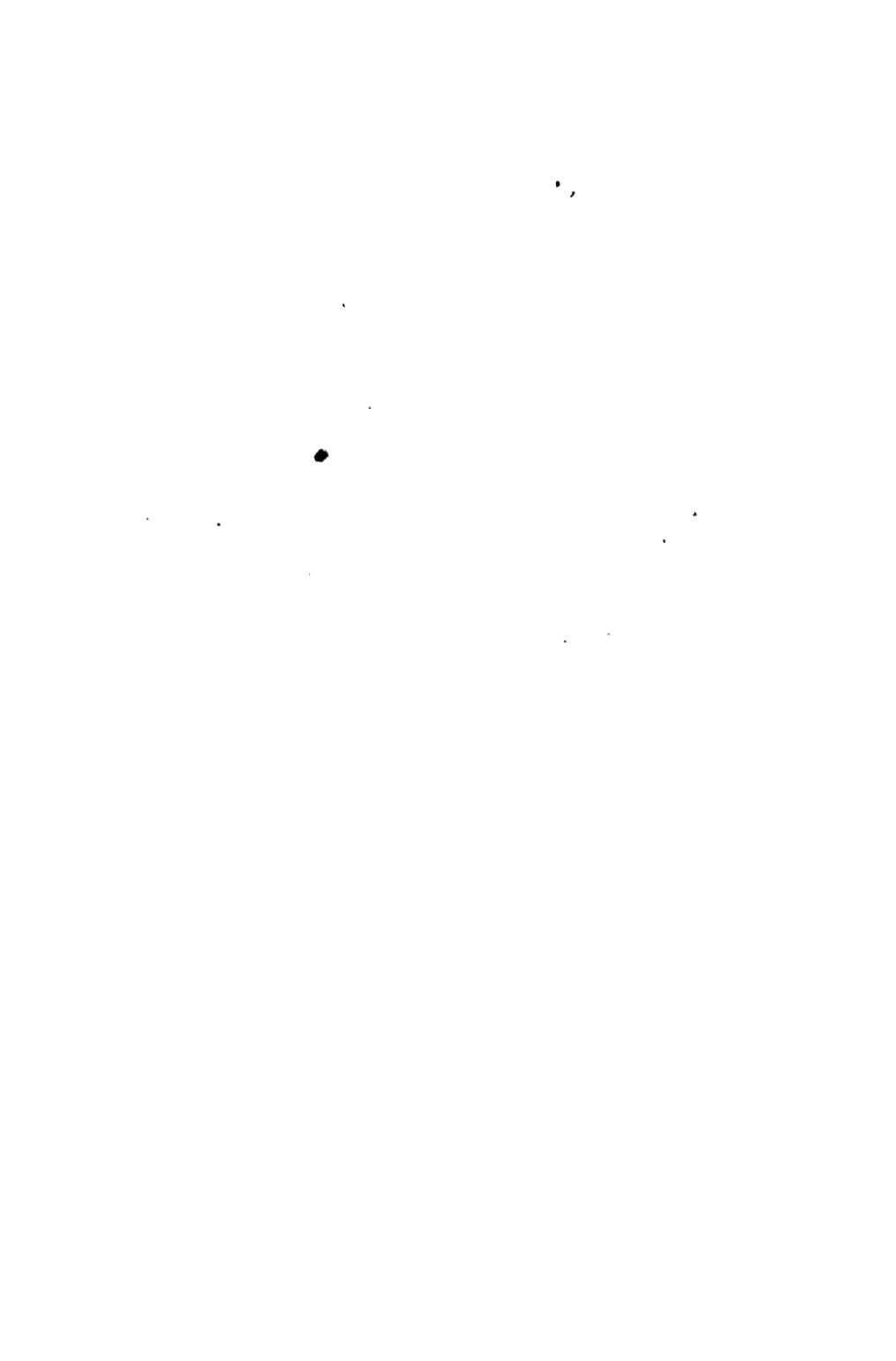


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A

WINTER JOURNEY

TO

KOORDISTAUN.

CHAPTER I.

Leave Soolimaniah—Vale of Soolimaniah—Migratory Shepherds—Koordish Horsemanship—Pass of Durbund-el-Bazian—Perilous Ascent—Gate of Koordistaun—Fantastic Crags—Descent of the Mountain—Rugged Defile—Picturesque Effect—Crossing a River—Koordish Encampment—Canine Sentinels—A Koordish Chief—Groupes of Tombs—Influx of Nomadic Tribes—Koordish Boundaries—Locusts.

AFTER repeated delays and disappointments, the Koordish guide, who was appointed by the Pasha of Soolimaniah to be our *compagnon de voyage* as far as the banks of the Tigris, made his appearance, and having concluded all our preparations for the nature of our journey, which still lay through mountainous regions, where the

roads were no better than mere mule-paths, and often beset by marauding parties, we bade adieu to Soolimaniah at noon-day, on the 14th of April. In all my interviews with Sooleymaun Pasha, I found him frank and honest; and his conversation was far less tinged with Oriental hyperbole than that of any other Mahomedan I had ever before met with.

We had not proceeded far from the city before our guide stopped in a narrow lane, to receive into his saddle-bags sundry letters and messages for people who resided in the several hamlets through which we were to pass on our way southward. When we cleared the suburbs of the city we made another halt, to await the arrival of an Armenian merchant, who had requested permission to travel under our protection. I now found that the Koord had lagged far behind, and was conversing with people apparently of greater importance to him than ourselves. We were certainly not prepared for this detention, little thinking that

such an inconvenience would assail us in the very suburbs of the city we had just left.

As our track was most distinctly marked out, we were determined to experience no further detention, so, pushing on over a good road that led through a rich and well-irrigated vale, we soon lost sight of Soolimaniah. This lovely valley was surrounded by a chain of glorious mountains, whose loftiest summits presented the most fantastically shaped peaks, and were imbedded in snow. The oak clothed the declivities of these Carducian Alps, and the walnut-tree abounded in regions less elevated, diversifying the rich pasturage of the high table-lands, where the Koordish shepherds fed their flocks and herds. On taking a south-easterly direction, we soon crossed the river Diala, which, rising in Mount Zagros and pursuing a southerly course, falls into the Tigris near the ruins of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. The Lycus of Ptolemy derives its source from nearly the same spring.

The vale of Soolimaniah widened into a

broad expanse, and presented a soft and mellow undulating surface, which declined towards the east for about thirty miles. Vineyards clothed the sides of this valley, which was well watered by numerous mountain streams, and which may be considered a delightful specimen of Koordish climate and scenery. Indeed, the salubrity of the former is quite proverbial; and the latter is such as the admirers of the beauties of creation would delight to dwell upon. In the beautiful language of the inspired Psalmist, “The smaller hills are girded with joy; the pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; at the return of spring they shout for joy; they break forth into singing*.” Clusters of little villages were scattered throughout the vale; but these, and all the other hamlets near which we passed, did not appear to contain a population equal to the villages of a similar size in the neighbouring coun-

* Psalm lxv. 12, 13.

tries, because Koordistaun is still the seat of war and strife—a constant struggle being kept up between Koords, Turks, and Persians; as in olden times is said to have been between the Romans and Parthians.

We rode on for a distance of sixteen miles through this enchanting valley, and then entered the gorge of a lofty and precipitous mountain. The mountain itself was barren and uncultivated, but, on descending its southern side in an oblique direction to the village of Temar, this arid aspect vanished, and an undulating plain spread its bright green surface along the base of the craggy ranges, where herds of cattle were browsing under the watchful eye of their keepers. These pastors possessed no fixed habitations, but wandered about the country with their dark-brown tents, and sheep. They saluted us as we passed, and received the usual reply, “ Aleikoum salaum; Ullah weeakoom!” God protect you; unto thee be peace! When we told them that our course lay to the “ Bur-

reah," or flat country bordering the great rivers of Irak and Mesopotamia, they said, " You had better change your dress, and join us: you know not our happiness on these hills; here we live secure from oppression; and, should the pasha come to rob us, we enter the rugged passes of our mountains, where he can never find us." The women always accompany their husbands in these flights. They all ride *en cavalier*, and no horsemen can ascend the heights, or gallop down the declivities, with greater boldness.

To excel in horsemanship, is considered by the Koords of both sexes, as well as by the Arabians, a most essential accomplishment. Hence the boast of Amriolkais:—" Often have I risen at early dawn, while the birds were yet in their nests, and mounted a steed with smooth short hair, of a full height; and so fleet as to make captive the beasts of the forests. Ready in turning, quick in pursuing, bold in advancing, firm in backing; and performing the whole with the strength and swiftness of a vast rock which a torrent

has pushed from its lofty base. He makes the light youth slide from his seat, and violently shakes the skirts of a heavier and more stubborn rider*."

From Temar to Dolan the ascent is considerable, and the direction of the road nearly due south. After winding through a very narrow and rugged defile for two hours, we alighted, and, leading our horses up the steep and jagged hill, commenced ascending the celebrated pass of Durbund-el Bazian. This pass precisely accords with the account given by Xenophon of his passage through the defiles of the Carducian mountains.

As we advanced, the natural features of the defile grew more and more imposing, until the rocks, gradually approaching each other, seemed all at once to close in upon us without leaving a trace even of any outlet. Sometimes the path wound along dizzy precipices without any protect-

* See the Moallakat by Sir W. Jones, p. 10.

ing wall, and, at other times, it led past deep and rugged ravines, formed by the rushing of innumerable mountain-torrents, where the road was so narrow that the loads on the mules actually overhung these formidable chasms. On the left of our path was a frightful chasm, which admitted a strong mountain-torrent, that had evidently forced itself through the very heart of the mountain. We soon passed over an arch of just sufficient width for the passage of our Kajavahs, and scaled an overhanging cliff whose sides were nearly perpendicular, varying from five hundred to fifteen hundred feet in height, without any interval between them and the stream. Their rugged bosoms gave nourishment to a few stunted oaks that hung to the scanty soil. Some distant banks appeared to produce the wild vine, others were tufted with small trees and bushes growing most luxuriantly, the continued shade furnishing them with moisture.

The arid chasm alone was naked, and

strewed with huge fragments detached from the topmost cliffs, which had rolled into the stream and formed rocky islets, around whose base the impetuous torrent was dashing. This strong pass, as I have just observed, presented so many windings in its course, that the eye could not penetrate beyond a few yards, and we were often at a loss to trace the direction whence the passage would issue out, so completely mountain-locked did it appear. Continuing our progress towards the south, though still ascending, we reached some ruined circular watch-towers and a parapet, which our guide said was called the "Gate of Koordistaun." The opening of this barrier was about twenty yards wide, whence some mouldering walls of masonry led down the hill; a strong hold in olden times, perhaps, against Roman inroads. At this point, a small band of armed men might arrest the advance of any force however numerous; it is difficult even for a single horseman; and the spot is most conveniently situated for overlooking

all the entrances into Koordistaun from the Assyrian side.

I think it is not at all unlikely that this position often became the scene of military operations. The early historians have been so loose and inaccurate in their accounts, that it is scarcely possible to trace the movements of the numerous armies that passed through Assyria into the country of the Carducii. There can be no doubt, however, that this was the formidable pass through which Heraclius marched, on his route to Ganzaca after the fall of Dustajird, because it is the only road by which he could possibly have reached Siozuros.

There is no part of the landscape which the eye wanders over with more interest than the crags of Durbund-el-Bazian, which stand up on every side in the most rugged and fantastic forms—sometimes strangely piled one on the other, and sometimes as strangely yawning in clefts of a frightful depth. We looked towards the rugged pathway we had scaled, and watched the

slow progress of the kafilah toiling up the steep ascent. As the road ran in a zig-zag direction, the mules were occasionally lost, but soon emerged again upon a higher point, hanging apparently on the verge of a precipice; notwithstanding which the katurjees pursued their way without the slightest apprehension.

We passed over the summit of this mountain, and commenced our descent by a path equally rugged to the one we had ascended on its northern face. A long, but dilapidated embattled wall, composed of very large stones, interrupted at intervals by round towers, extended all along the craggy hills upon our left, and the remains of an inner wall were slightly traceable, which appeared to have formed a sort of second line of defence to this impenetrable, and once castellated mountain range.

Our descent was extremely sudden. The ridges on either side of us were covered with small shrubs and oak-trees, producing a considerable quantity of gall-nuts. The

view from this point towards the direction in which we were hastening, developed an extensive plain, which seemed to dissolve into a flat waste, its horizon being indistinctly tinged by the Hamrine hills. To the north, or rear, a succession of mountain ranges rising successively one over the other, crowned by the snowy summits of Mount Zagros, presented a bold and picturesque view. Diodorus Siculus thus describes these parts:—" This country (on approaching it from Mesopotamia) as far as *the ladders*, as they are called, that is, the passes of Mount Zagros, is flat and low, exceedingly hot, and barren of provision; but the rest is higher, of a wholesome air, and very fruitful*." When we had descended about midway, and reached a more open passage, the muleteers halted under a small oak tree, and devoured the remains of a sheep they had just stolen, after which, they lighted their kaleoons, and pressed onwards at a brisk trot, chanting some rude and simple air.

* Diodorus Siculus, B. xix. c. 2.

On emerging from our rocky prison, we proceeded over a countless succession of calcareous hills, passing several villages by the way. On the afternoon of the 16th of April, we again entered a rugged defile, along the edge of a precipice, whose summit hung above our heads to a height of at least five hundred feet. We sent a man forward, to ascertain whether there was any likelihood of meeting a kafilah, as, after entering the defile, it would be utterly impossible either to turn our own loaded mules, or to pass those of any other party. The emissary did not return, so we concluded the passage was clear, and wound through it as rapidly as possible. Two of the mules sadly deranged the equilibrium of their loads, by striking against the elbows of the rocks, which caused some detention, as the katurjees were obliged to stop the whole caravan (the mules being linked one to the other by an iron curb-chain), and to cover the animals' eyes, previously to attempting any adjustment of the baggage.

Our train of mules had a very picturesque effect when it wound along these mountain passes. First of all, the tinkling bell of the leading mule is heard, breaking with its simple sound the stillness of the airy height; then the voice of the katurjee bashee, urging forward some overloaded straggler. At length, they emerge from the mountain pass, and present themselves in full relief against the sky with their gay and fanciful trappings, tufts, and tassels, with which the Persian muleteers are so fond of decorating them.

We now entered a cultivated valley of moderate size, and approached the banks of a stream, which appeared more than usually rapid: the head muleteer was anxious to ascertain its shallows before we crossed; and our servant, Meerza Hoossain, equally desirous to "astonish the natives," spurred onwards, giving his steed the reins, and sprang into the Rubicon, shouting, "Mubarek! mubarek!" The head muleteer also shouted out, "Wallah, billah! khuda

hafiz shuma!" May God protect you; and we rushed to the margin of the stream, where we saw both man and horse buffetting the current, which was almost too much for the poor Meerza, who with extreme difficulty succeeded in reaching the opposite bank; not, however, until he had visited *le fond*. Some of the katurjees were a little too late to witness this *début*, so they called out to him to repeat the feat; but the Meerza had by this time repented of his *fierté*, and now cut a most ridiculous figure, with his head as bare as a bedlamite's, the hairs of his beard hanging in stiff flakes, and distended like a rat's tail. His distress also was greatly increased by the loud laughter of the whole party, and by their shouts of **Barick Ullah!** **Mash Ullah!** At length he recovered himself, and stammered out, "I beg to remain where I am: as you have had your share of the 'frolic,' give me a turn of it." But although we quite agreed with him, that fair play was the first law of nature, we possessed no *penchant* for such an exploit,

but rode along the side of the stream, and sought a ford, which enabled us to cross to the opposite bank without any similar sort of achievement.

Winding round a hill, and diverging through a mysterious-looking path to the right of the road, which did not appear much trodden, we were conducted to a Koordish encampment, called Ibrahim Kanchee. It was a most dismal-looking place, but having travelled for so many hours, we were glad to accept even a bandit's invitation. Salvator Rosa never imagined a more suitable spot for a band of marauders. Shortly after our arrival, the chief of the camp assigned us a tent, and sent us a dinner consisting of a pair of grilled fowls, and some round cakes sprinkled over with the seeds of the simsin (*Sesamum orientale*). Our guide and an Armenian merchant were served with a wooden bowl of sour milk, and eggs fried in oil. After them came the owner of the tent, who was soon beard-deep in his meal, and, last of all, our old katurjee

bashee seized one of the wooden platters out of which we all by turns had eaten, and, gathering the fragments together, devoured them with the greatest avidity.

During the whole night, large fires blazed before the door of every tent, around which numbers of ferocious-looking dogs were crouched ready to attack all intruders. These faithful sentinels are attached to the camps of all the Nomadic Koords, and in form strongly resemble jackals. They have very long legs, and immense bushy tails.

The attachment of the Koords to their chieftains is indescribably strong, and the influence of these chiefs over their tribe equally so. If one is ever slain in war, it is never forgiven nor forgotten. They carry on an everlasting feud, never ceasing until they have had their “blood revenge.” I know not what power could ever succeed in bringing them under subjection; for not only is the whole country mountainous and inaccessible, but they are eternally flying from one end of it to the other, the brief duration of their stay

in any given spot being regulated according to circumstances. In all their camps the tent of the chief occupies a central position; round him his relatives range, and round these again his vassals form the outermost circle.

The demeanour of the chief of Ibrahim Kanchee was frank, manly, and courteous: I shall never forget the expression of his dark resolute eye, which beamed through his clear olive complexion. He was truly a fine specimen of the independent Koord—straight, clean-limbed, and erect. The figure of the chieftain in the foreground of Hayter's splendid picture of “ Koords assisting Georgians in surprising and carrying off Circassian women,” gives a good idea of him. The complexion of the Koord is darker than that of either the Turk or Persian: and the older he grows the darker he becomes, from exposure to the elements. This, by the way, is the case with most Asiatics, especially the females, and with the Anglo-Indian, *vulgariter*, “ half-cast,” in a superlative degree.

On the 17th of April, we quitted Ibrahim Kanchee at sunrise, and, after travelling for several hours, passed the second range of hills on the southern side of Mount Zagros. The first was composed of calcareous limestone, but this last contained a great variety of breccias. The first, or northern, range was much higher than the second; but, in other respects, the superficial aspect of both was similar, and their strata inclined to the west. The descent to the plains was steep and rugged, but, after we passed the second or inferior range, we wound through low sandy hillocks composed of sandstone and gravel. This part of the country wore a desert aspect, and many groupes of tombs were observed upon the sloping heights to the right. These tombs stood alone; there were neither villages in the neighbourhood, nor any traces even of encampments. Many were heaped closely together, as if some great engagement had taken place, and the slain had been hastily interred. The central tombs, however, had granite pillars of some

elevation, intending, perhaps, to mark the graves of chieftains of rank.



The influx of the Nomadic tribes from Assyria and Mesopotamia had in this neighbourhood set in so strong, that the Koords are seldom seen in these wilds: they can endure fatigue and privation without a murmur, but the plains of Persia or Arabia, are to them “murder and sudden death.” Their history is as mysterious, as their fate is severe. They disappear from the earth like appar-

tions, leaving no traces behind them. An unlettered race, their wars and their deeds of arms have ever remained a sealed volume to the inquiring world. No Ossian has transmitted to us in traditional rhapsodies their battles, heroes, or adventures.

The Koords are not very particular in regard to the limits of their boundary lines; but the neighbourhood of Kifri, to which town we were proceeding, is considered by them as the south-eastern frontier of their country. It is situated upon a branch of the Odorneh*, and is about fifty miles to the southward of the encampment of Ibrahim Kanchee. Our march was very wearisome, for the plain we had traversed was covered with young locusts, which gave ourselves and our cattle the greatest annoyance. They

* Supposed to be the Phycus of Xenophon. The natives call it the river of Delli Abbas. Kinneir, in his Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire (page 297), says, "the Odorneh is formed by the junction of many streams which arise in hills between Kerkook and Soolimaniah. It pursues a south-west course, and falls into the Tigris twenty fursungs above Baghdad."

were extinguishing all vegetable life, and spreading the winding sheet of death over every cultivated tract*. How intimately acquainted was the prophet Joel with the rapacity of these legions when he exclaimed—

“ He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig-tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white.

“ The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth.

“ How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate†.”

“ The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen so shall they run.

“ Like the noise of chariots on the tops of

* The locusts are mentioned by Pliny, Book xi. cap. 29. They were so called from *loco usito*, because the havoc they made wherever they passed left behind the appearance of a place desolated by fire.

† Joel i. 7, 10, 18.

mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array."

* * * *

" They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks.

" Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and *when* they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.

" They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

" The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining*."

* Joel ii. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10.

CHAPTER II.

Kifri—Naphtha Pits—Antique Relics—Mode of Burial—Rings and Seals—Daoud Pasha—Punishment of Chaldea—Journey Resumed—Burial Place—Turkish Prejudice—Desert of Khalis—The Mirage—Ajameeah Encampment—Dwarfish Chief—In-hospitable Reception—Banks of the Delos—Baggage Mules—Atmospherical Purity—Camp of Illyautts—Illyautt Hospitality—Illyautt Ladies—False Dawn—Persian Mules—A Halt—Howesh—Dates—Fuel—Rafts of the Tigris—Assyrian Boats—Approach to Baghdad.

WE reached Kifri at nightfall, and occupied a good caravanserai built in the Persian style of architecture. Its keeper told us the Persian troops from Kermanshaw, headed by the governor of that city, had recently sacked the town, and committed the greatest excesses. The inhabitants were distressed, and without any occupation. Even the Tartar communication between Baghdad, and Constantinople, was entirely cut off; and all this misery had been produced by

Persian depredation. The post-house was entirely deserted, its walls partially torn down, and the shops in the bazaar were un-supplied. The hills overlooking the place contained gypsum and naphtha, and wore a most arid and forbidding aspect. The only refreshing object was a tortuous stream, which wound round the walls and passed through several of the streets.

The naphtha pits or wells are situated between this town and Kerkouk, and the natives skim the surface of these pits with iron ladles, pouring the naphtha into sheep-skin bags, which they transport, on the backs of asses, to Baghdad and other towns, for sale. These springs yield a profit of forty thousand piastres annually. D'Anville says, “*Dans le voisinage de cette ville, il sort des rochers de l'huile de napthe, qui est reçue dans un espèce de puits; et je trouve dans une relation manuscrite d'un voyage au Levant, par le Pere Emanuel de St. Albert, visiteur des missions de son ordre des Carmes, et depuis évèque in partibus, qu'en remuant*

la terre aux environs, il en sort des bluettes. On lit dans la Géographie Turque, qu'en cruesant la terre sur un tertre appellé Khor-Kour Baba, il en sort du feu qui fait faire flamme, et que des vases posés dans des trous qu'on y voie, bouillir l'eau dont en les a remplis; en ajoutant, qu'on éteint la chaleur de ces trous en les comblant de terre*." The naphtha, or rock-oil, of Men-deli, near Kerkouk, is of the black kind, and is used as a substitute for pitch. The Baghdadees rub the keels of their boats with it, and the villagers at Samarah burn it instead of lamp-oil. Near Dawlakey, in the Persian province of Fars, I saw two fountains of white naphtha. The oil floated on the surface of the water, and the peasants collected it for the purpose of rubbing over their camels, as it prevents a cutaneous disorder common to that animal.

To the south-west of the town, we examined some mounds which encased the remains of a

* D'Anville sur l'Euphrate et le Tigre, p. 107.

Sassanian city. I made some excavations into the side of a hill, and found bricks assimi-



lating in quality and dimensions with those forming the walls of Ctesiphon. Among the *débris* I found an old iron seal-ring, and several thin silver Shaporian coins, similar to those I had before met with at the sculptured ruins of Shapor, near Kauzeroun, and in many other parts of Persia.

They weighed a drachma each. The king's head upon them was bearded, and

had long flowing hair: the diadem was ornamented with feathers, which resembles the Egyptian symbol of two wings supporting a moon and star. The characters, although not very legible, were in the Pehlevi language. The fire altar was, as usual, supported by two priests, and very rudely executed. Small burnt clay images, and urns filled with osseous remains, were also numerous in every ruined site throughout the country. Mr. Rich, the Honourable Major Keppel, Sir Robert Ker Porter, and other travellers, are of opinion that these urns contain the bones of Greeks and Romans rather than of Asiatics, from the presumption that such a mode of burial did



not accord with the religious opinions and institutions of Oriental people. The following passage from Erskine's Translation of the "Desâtir" will, however, prove the contrary:—"A corpse, you may place in a vase of aquafortis, or consign it to the fire, or to the earth." Commentary.—"The usage of the Fersendajians, regarding the dead, was this:—after the soul had left the body, they washed it in pure water, and dressed it in clean and perfumed vestments*; they then put it in a vase of aquafortis, and, when the body was dissolved, carried the liquid to a place far from the city, and poured it out; or else, they burned it in fire, after attiring it, as has been said; or, they made a dome, and formed a deep pit within it, which they built, and whitened with stone, brick, and mortar; and on its

* These rites may be found alluded to in Homer and in the works of other poets and philosophers of Greece. Lucian describes the dead in his time as washed, perfumed, vested, and crowned, *ἀπαῖδος ἀνθεῖτιν*, with the flowers most in season. Homer, Euripides, &c., *passim*. Lucian, tom. ii. p. 927.

edges, niches were constructed and platforms erected, on which the dead were deposited; or they buried a *vase in the earth*, and enclosed the corpse in it, or buried it in a coffin in the ground; and, in the estimation of the Fersendajians, the most eligible of all these was the vase of aquafortis." Engraved rings and seals are also found in great numbers, and are thus noticed by Herodotus, in his account of the Babylonians:—" Each person has a seal ring, and a cane, or walking-stick, upon the top of which is carved an apple, a rose, a lily, an



eagle, or some figure or other; for, to have a stick without a device was unlawful*."

Here the authority of Sooleymaun Pasha of Koordistaun ceased, to give place to that of the Turkish government, in the person of a zabit, who received his credentials from the powerful Daoud, pasha of Baghdad. Hitherto, the peasantry of Koordistaun, although despised by their military countrymen, were comparatively secure. But, throughout this extensive and once populous pashalic, the fellahs or serfs are reduced to the lowest ebb. They exist under the heel of an inhuman domination, haughty in its ignorance, and merciless in its creed. The government of Daoud Pasha is tyranny, his revenue extortion, and his law the sword. Assyria is fallen from her golden supremacy†, Chaldaea

* Herodotus: *Clio, exc.*

† "The Lord will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. Flocks shall lie down in the midst of her; both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall ring in the windows; desolation shall be in the

is condemned to be the haunt of the lion*, Nineveh is no more†, and Babylon is a ruin‡.

Cyrus, Darius, Alexander, Seleucus, Antigonus, Demetrius, Antiochus, Trajan, Severus, Julian, Heraclius, Omar, Hulakoo,

thresholds. How is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in!” (Zephaniah ii. 13, 14, 15).

* Chaldea was once the most fertile region of the whole East (*Agrum totius Orientis fertilissimum*, Plin. *Hist. Nat. lib. v. c. 26*), and its government accounted the noblest in the Persian empire. Besides supplying horses for military service, it maintained about seventeen thousand horses for the sovereign’s use. Exclusive of monthly subsidies, the supply from Chaldea for the subsistence of the monarch and his army, amounted to a third part of all that was levied from the whole of the Persian dominions, which at that time extended from the Hellespont to India. (Herodotus, *lib. i. c. 192*). Such was the “Chaldees excellency.”

“I will punish the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. Chaldea shall be a spoil, and all that spoil her shall be satisfied. Come against her from the utmost border, open her store-houses: cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: a sword is upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed.” (Jeremiah xxv. 12; l. 10, 26, 37).

† Nahum i. 8, 14. Ibid. i. 14.

‡ Jeremiah li. 31; Isaiah xiii. 14; Jer. l. 13, 51.

Tamarlane, and Mahmood, have successively desolated and exacted tribute from this oppressed and violated region*.

“ I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot†.”

“ I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flocks, and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers.

“ Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant.

“ They shall roar together like lions: they shall yell together like lions' whelps‡.

“ The wild beasts of the desert shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein§.”

April the 19th.—We left Kifri at six o'clock in the morning, and at ten rested beneath

* Jeremiah xxiv. 14.

† Isaiah xiv. 25.

‡ Jeremiah li. 23, 37, 38.

§ Ibid. l. 39.

the shade of some turfahs, and by the side of a sluggish stream. Having passed an hour here, we proceeded, and at noon again alighted, to pasture our cattle beside a rill, from whose marshy bed long coarse grass and a species of calamus grew to the height of thirty feet, marking its irregular course through the plain, until it gradually became a speck in the horizon, and was lost. Still descending through an uneven valley surrounded by low hills, we crossed a branch of the Diala, which, in the summer season, overflows a low marshy plain of great extent. On the slope of the southern bank stands Kara-tuppah (the black mound), a small hamlet containing about eighty houses. We spent the night here, as we had to make a forced march on the following day. Without the town an infinite number of tombs extended *across* the road. On asking our Koordish guide why the dead reposed in so public a spot? he replied nearly thus:—

“ Mahomedans always like to select the roadside for a burial-place, in the hope that

the departed spirit may obtain pardon at the hands of the Prophet, from the prayers that you and I offer up in its behalf."—"But" I rejoined, "how can my prayers avail, since you hold me to be a *Giaour*?" To this he said, "Al Ullah! God is great, Mahommed is his prophet! There is no objection; it is a matter that rests between you and your God; if your mother taught you an infidel creed, you are quite as safe as the Osmanlees themselves."

We were quartered in the dwelling of a Turk, who kept a sort of *auberge*, or open house, for travellers, and who had been residing here for twenty years. Our host told us, that he once supplied the Baghdad government Tartars* with post-horses from this town to Kerkouk (Corcura, vel Demetrias) and Erbile (Arbella), but, finding it a losing speculation, he was obliged to give it up. He brought us a sheep, and requested Meerza Hoossain to put a price on it; but

* Turkish messengers in the service of the Ottoman Porte.

our Koord, without waiting to hear if a bargain was agreed on, seized the animal by force, stabbed it, and apportioned the carcass amongst our muleteers, who threw the joints into a pot of water, cooking them all in a few seconds.

The Turk, having caught a glimpse of the "naked face," as he termed it, of our servant-maid, asked me, if all the *Ingrèsse* women were as pretty? He said, it was forbidden by the Prophet for men to associate with them in the public manner I had been doing, according to the account of Meerza Hoosain. I could not help laughing heartily at this remark, and replied, that I had been favoured with a sight of many a "naked face" in Persia and Turkey, where several "lights of the Harem" had voluntarily shewn us their pretty countenances. "This" he rejoined, "was not of much consequence, as they all wore trowsers, and," added he, "those women who do *not* wear them, must be most immodest creatures."

On quitting Kara-tuppah, our road still

lay in a southerly direction, and through an extensive plain, for about nine miles: we then crossed the river Naharwaun*, over a fine brick bridge of six arches, built by Ali Pasha many years ago, and suddenly entered a narrow pass of mouldering sandstone rock. Descending into the flat desert of Khâlis, we saw no more scattered hamlets, nor any straggling abodes of men. The country was one long sweeping plain, destitute of trees, indescribably silent, and stretching out beyond the reach of vision, leaving the mind exhausted in the endeavour to trace its boundless and lonesome extent. It, however, derives an interest from its immensity, possessing in some degree the solemn grandeur of the ocean. Gibbon thus describes this part of Assyria:—“ The

* Nehrwan is situated at the distance of four farsang from Baghdad. A considerable stream flows there. Hence to the borders of Holwan is a desert, without any buildings or inhabited places between it and Samerch, or between Shehrzour and the borders of Tacrit. (Ebn Haukal.)

extensive region that lies between the river Tigris and the mountains of Media, was once filled with villages and towns; and the fertile soil, for the most part, was in a very improved state of cultivation. But, on the approach of the Romans, this rich and smiling prospect was instantly blasted. Wherever they moved, the inhabitants deserted the open villages and took shelter in the fortified towns; the cattle were driven away; the grass and ripe corn were consumed with fire; and, as soon as the flames had subsided which interrupted the march of Julian, he beheld the melancholy face of a smoking and naked desert *."

The mirage, with its beautiful phantasmagoria of landscape and figures, amused our march this day, and, amongst various other optical illusions, we saw a wide spreading lake, and, on its winding banks, an extensive city elevated in the midst of the beauty of earth and sky. Stately edifices rose before our eyes in

* Vide Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* Vol. ii. c. xxiv. p. 374.

all the pomp of their magnificence, and thousands of fantastically shaped towers pointed their alabaster peaks towards the clear ethereal canopy; these suddenly rent themselves into countless spires, as if they had been stricken by lightning, and as rapidly united again into their original shapes. In this desert all living objects appeared gigantic:—a party of Arabs, for instance, assumed, in the distance, the appearance of enormous height; their goats looked as large as camels, and their asses as tall as giraffes. As we approached them nearer and nearer the illusion diminished, and we at last found the magnitude of these objects degenerated into their natural proportions.

At five o'clock in the afternoon, we came to an encampment, where, to our surprise, we were refused even a drop of water to wet our parched lips. Indeed, the people appeared more inclined to rob us than to supply our wants. As my wife was on the point of fainting with exhaustion, in consequence of such long imprisonment in her kajawah, (the syce,

or groom, having broken the near side head of her saddle several days ago,) we were glad to heap our baggage around us in a circle, and to pass the night in the open air. We cared little for this, as, throughout our long journey, we took every thing rough and smooth as we found it.

Having seen the horses picqueted, I inquired for the tent of the chief of the encampment, and on my way passed many spare tents. Accosting a young shepherd boy, he told me the tribe called themselves "Ajameeah," a mongrel race of Persian robbers, utterly devoid of the hospitality of Arabs and the civility of villagers. On entering the largest tent, I indistinctly saw through a cloud of smoke, a fellow who was a dwarf in stature, reclining on a Persian carpet, using his chibouque in "full puff." At first this little *great* man declined to see me, but subsequently consented, though he sternly refused to allow me to sit down, although I left my boots outside his tent door. I civilly told him that I was an Englishman

travelling to Baghdad with my family, and hoped he would shelter us for the night. His chiboujee, or pipe-bearer, whispered in his ear something about finding us lucrative guests, as we were always wandering in search of "old stones," in which we discovered gold; and, above all, added he, "they make a rule to pay just what you please for every thing supplied to them." After the little man had exhausted his displeasure on me for the intrusion, he thrust his chibouque in his mouth, and drew such a draught upon it that the flesh of his thin pale cheeks seemed to be so collapsed one within the other, I feared he never could succeed in unlocking them; but a long and lusty puff, which sent a volume of smoke rolling over my head, effected that purpose. Having thus relieved himself of all ill-humour by that "safety valve," his mouth, he asked me, if I wished to smoke? handing over at the same time his pipe and a tobacco bag containing some splendid samples of that Persian luxury. I accepted it, with many thanks. Although he now ap-

peared so well reconciled to our stay, he positively refused to give us a tent, but he ordered us some apps and eggs, for which, however, the exorbitant charge of five raej piastres was made, and a similar amount for a little rancid oil wherewith to fry them. We never before experienced such an inhospitable reception, having always received a cordial welcome even amongst the poorest tribes. Whilst we were supping *à la Perse*, we were rather chagrined at the coolness of the chief, who, after having finished his own supper, came over to us, and, with a friendly recognition, which might be termed "free and easy," commenced *sans ceremonie* attacking ours; to this, however, we would not submit. He then was inclined to be insolent, but slunk away, asserting as he went, that we did not believe in a prophet or a God.

We found that weariness does not always ensure sleep: the howling of the wind, the noise of dogs, the pertinacious curiosity of the idle, and the cries of immense troops of jackals, prevented our enjoying much sleep;

so, long before the day dawned, we resumed our journey, and soon reached the Delos, which at this point appeared nearly as broad as the Tigris at Mousul. We dismounted, and descended to the river to quench our raging thirst. Two of the muleteers, who had vainly endeavoured to persuade Meerza Hoossain to follow them, plunged in, and swam to the opposite bank. The stream was rapid and eddying, and much swollen by the melting of the snows in the upper country. Along the banks a beautifully rich turf spread out, widening or narrowing according to the nature of the ground. As we rode along, the Meerza observed a party of Arabs on the eastern side of the river, which made him very uneasy, being fearful, as all men are in this wild region, of sudden attack. It turned out, however, nothing more serious than one of the usual encounters. The courageous Meerza, who considered himself bound by no principle of action but that which is comprised in the duty of "taking care of yourself," was much relieved at dis-

covering their peaceable intentions. We exchanged with them the customary and courteous salutation, Unto you be peace! "Teyyub; all's well!" and continued our route.

Being always in advance of the baggage mules, we halted under every bush we could find, or, failing one, reclined beneath the shadow of the kajavahs, or our own horses. Some of the party were sure to produce a goat-skin bag with bread, or a few dates, which we shared until the arrival of the mules, when we mounted and rode onwards again. Although these temporary halts refreshed our horses, they fatigued us in no small degree, especially Mrs. Mignan, who found it no easy matter to escape from her prison-cage, there being no steps or other convenience by the aid of which she might descend. I used to kneel down and offer my back as her footstool, both on her alighting and ascending. The poor mules never rested, but jogged on the whole day, sometimes for ten or twelve hours together, according to the distance we were compelled to perform.

In this part of Assyria, we found the deception of distance far more remarkable than it is on the ocean. All distant objects appeared nearer to us by several miles than they really were; the extreme purity of the air gave to them that degree of brightness and distinctness, which, in the thicker atmosphere of our own country, is to be seen only in those that are near. I remember looking from a caravanserai whence houses in the vicinity of the next stage were clearly discernible: we guessed them at about four or five miles distant, when in reality they were nearer twelve. At the decayed, uninhabited village of Delli-Abbas, called by the Arabs, "Guntarah," we observed the walls of an *imaum-zadah* elevated, and the building itself turned *topsy-turvy*, by some atmospheric influence. Although the real distance was full twenty miles, it appeared only eight.

Leaving this old town, spread out in ruins upon the desert, we saw a stream at some distance, bordered by excellent pasture, on which flocks and herds were browsing.

Groups of tents, black from their covering of coarse felt, were sprinkled here and there, and we could perceive people moving to and fro amongst them, or reclining at the entrances of these simple habitations. Every thing announced that we had reached the end of our day's journey, and that we had arrived at the camp of a few wandering Illyautts*. The instant they saw us, they set up a joyful shout, and warmly congratulated us. Men, women, and children, scampered out to meet and greet us with loud exclamations of welcome. The difference between this reception and that of the previous evening, made a great impression upon our minds. Even old decrepid women came waddling out in their loose flowing frocks, to see the "new arrivals." The female costume of this tribe, consisted of a pair of cossack trowsers, a blue chemise, open from the neck as far as the breast, and reaching to the knees, and a cotton headkerchief. The muleteers busied themselves un-

* The Illyautts may be called the Gipsies of Persia; they resemble them both in form and feature.

loading their cattle and arranging our baggage. The loud tones of inquiry—the extreme curiosity of the women and their little black-eyed children—the quarrelling between the ill-tempered katurjees and our servants, mingled with the tinkling of their mules' bells and many other indescribable sounds, in one stupifying din, formed an odd, and somewhat interesting scene.

We agreed to quit this camp at three o'clock in the morning, to enable us to reach Howesh before the sun became too powerful. We therefore hastened to render ourselves comfortable for the night, and begged a good supper. Nothing could exceed the extreme simplicity of the construction of this encampment. Three upright sticks driven into the ground, with another crossing their tops, formed the framework of each tent, whilst a large brown or black camel hair cloth, woven by the women, served as a covering for them. When taking a few notes, I saw an old Illyautt woman churning butter by swinging a goat's skin backwards and forwards,

after the manner already described. Our repast was extremely good. The large, round, muffin-like cakes sent to us, were light and wholesome, though not *quite* so white as they might have been.

I thanked these poor but happy people, for their kind treatment, and they prayed "Ul-lah" to protect and grant us many happy years. I gave the chief of the camp a clasped knife and some other trifling articles, and my lady likewise presented the women with several coral beads, which perfectly enchanted them. Whatever our vaunted civilization may have made us who, in England, boast of not knowing our next door neighbour, we are wretchedly behind all Oriental nations in acts of disinterested hospitality; and, for the genuine seeds of friendship, I know not what soil equals that of the uncultivated mind: no tares of selfishness there spring up to choke the growth of that sweet plant: the simple virtue of the tented Illyautt shines pre-eminent!

A very intelligent Persian nobleman thus

describes his entertainment by the Illyautt women :—" When I reached Koordistaun, I solicited the hospitality of the tented Illyautt, and received the greatest attention. The ladies, according to the custom of the country, were entirely unveiled. The daughter of my host was about fifteen years of age, and extremely beautiful. When I said I was thirsty, she ran to a rill, and brought me a cup of pure water. It was a draught from the fountain of life, brought by a peri; but, instead of extinguishing, it increased the flame which her dark languishing eyes had kindled in my breast. On bidding adieu to the encampment," he adds, " a vain and uninformed coxcomb might have mistaken the manner of my fair cup-bearer; but I had experience of these Illyautt damsels, and well knew that nothing was meant but that kindness and hospitality with which they treat all strangers who visit their tents. I believe them virtuous beyond all other women in Persia; and the man who should even attempt seduction, would be immediately sacrificed."

ficed to the implacable honour of their male relations."

We rose at dawn on the following morning. The little twinkling eyes of the cross old muleteer, who was always anxious to get soon into motion, detected the "Soo-bah Kauzib," or the *lying dawn*, as he called it—

" That earlier dawn
Whose glimpses are again withdrawn,
As if the Morn had waked, and then
Shut close her lids of light again."

This is an optical deception arising from the refraction of the sun's rays, even when it is below the visible horizon. It is very common in these parts. As we rode along, this flushed appearance vanished altogether; darkness ensued, but soon a brighter light flashed from the horizon to the zenith, and objects became distinctly visible. Major Scott Waring says, "the Persians account for this phenomenon in the most whimsical manner. They declare that as the sun rises from behind Mount Caucasus, it passes a hole

perforated through that mountain, and that, darting its rays through it, it is the cause of the *false* dawn, or this temporary appearance of daybreak. As it ascends, the earth is again veiled in darkness, until the sun rises above the mountain, and brings with it the *real* morning."

It is quite surprising to witness the power and speed of the Persian mules. There were two amongst our number that carried four bales of cloth, each bale weighing one hundred and fifty pounds. Many of them will fetch a sum equivalent to thirty guineas, in any part of the Persian empire. These were the property of a wealthy Armenian merchant named Gaspar Khan, for whom I advanced a sum of money at Soolimaniah, or they would there have been seized. I never saw a farthing of my money again, although I remained several months at Bagh-dad, and repeatedly applied (but in vain) to the British resident in that city for redress, as this fat and pursy Armenian was trading under his auspices.

The country continued level, and the soil of a diluvial nature, intersected by ravines and water-courses. No signs of habitation could be traced, though numbers of the red-legged partridge were rising from every patch of brushwood. We made no halt, but travelled onwards as fast as possible, in hopes of reaching the village by noon. At nine o'clock, we came to a narrow valley, through which ran a small stream of water. Our wearied animals had suffered so greatly from the countless dry canal beds over which we had travelled this morning, that the old muleteer, ever ready to sympathise with the stomachs of his mules, declared, he would not advance an inch further until he had refreshed them. So, yielding to his wishes, we were obliged to sound the halt. On resuming our wearisome march, we, at length, came up with large walled enclosures, and patches of rich verdure, cut into plots by numerous water-courses, and browsed over by horses, cows, sheep, and goats.

A little after twelve, we rode into Howesh,

and secured quarters in a spacious walled court-yard, from which we were enabled to exclude the curious, by closing its gates. The village stood upon the banks of the Tigris, amidst a thick date tree grove. The feathery-looking palm was here extremely beautiful, growing to a very considerable height. The desert had disappeared, and all around were green and fragrant trees. The zabit of the town farmed the gardens from a Georgian *protégé* of the pasha of Baghdad. He sent us a present of fruit, and a spirit distilled from the date tree, which was but little inferior to our own cordials. The dexterity of the Arab fellah, in climbing to pluck the date, equalled that of the Hindoo who ascends the cocoa-nut tree. They both adopt the same mode of ascent, clinging like monkeys to the stem, and assisting themselves up by a thick thong of hide thrown around the tree.

* Dafard el Hadad thus describes the leaf-~~or~~
date tree. "The superb date tree, whose ~~he~~-
guidly reclines, like that of a handsome woman."

I knew an old Arab woman at Bassorah who had made a voyage to Bombay. When she returned to Arabia, she was describing the beauties of that island, "but," added she, "there are no date groves, and the people are obliged to wait for the arrival of our baghalahs*, before a single date is to be found in the bazaar." Her hearers held up their hands, exclaiming, "Ullah! Ullah! how we pity those Indians, who are condemned to live in a country that does not produce dates!"

We could procure no fuel here for culinary purposes, but were obliged to use small round cakes of cow-dung. The whole process of cookery in all the village harems in Persia, and along the banks of the Euphrates, and Tigris, is performed by the agency of these

come with sleep." And in the poem of Amriolkais occurs this passage:—"Her long, coal-black hair decorated her back, thick and diffused, like bunches of dates clustering on the palm tree."

* Arab vessels, varying in size from fifty to one hundred and fifty tons and upwards.

cakes, which impart no disagreeable taste or smell whatever to the viands. They are also used in all the manufactories of metal and of earthen vessels. They throw out a most powerful heat, and emit little or no flame. The disagreeable fabrication of them belongs exclusively to the fair sex. The wife of the richest Turkish zâbit may be seen employing her little white hands in mixing them with chopped straw, and strewing them out in the harem court to dry in the sun.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 24th of April, we quitted Howesh, and soon reached the margin of the Tigris, on which we saw several "kelleks," or leathern-bottomed rafts of Assyria, floating down with the stream towards the capital of the Arabian kaliphs, piled to an immense height with firewood, pottery, and merchandise of every description. The method of navigating this river with vessels so peculiarly constructed as the *πλοῖα σκύτινα*, or "navigia coriacea" of the ancient, and the

“ kellek ” of the modern, Babylonians, remains unaltered to this very day. The substratum is composed of inflated sheepskin bags, supporting a number of poplar spars tied firmly together. The boat is managed as described by Herodotus, and, on the boatmen reaching Baghdad, they break up their vessel, dispose of its spars, and return to Mosoul and other towns with their empty skins, to serve in supporting another load of spars and goods. Besides this raft, we saw two other kinds of boats—one long, sharp, and narrow, and the second high, and crescent-shaped, both rudely formed with wooden ribs and planks thickly coated with bitumen. In the creeks a round ribbed boat, or coracle, was used, which the natives call a “ kooffah,” and which I have illustrated in my work on Babylonia. This is also covered with bitumen, and composed either of thin willow rods, or the mid-rib of the frond of the date tree.

Beloe, in his translation of Herodotus (Clio. cap. 194), says, “ Of all that I saw

in this country, next to Babylon itself, what to me appeared the greatest curiosity, were the boats. These, which are used by those who come to the city, are of a circular form, and made of skins. They are constructed in Armenia, in the parts above Assyria, where the sides of the vessels, being formed of willow, are covered externally with skins, and, having no distinction of head or stern, are modelled into the shape of a shield. Lining the bottoms of these boats with reeds, they take on board their merchandise, and thus commit themselves to the stream. The principal article of their commerce is palm wine, which they carry in casks. The boats have two oars, one man to each; one pulls to him, the other pushes from him. These boats are of very different dimensions; some of them are so large as to bear freights to the value of five thousand talents: the smaller of them has one ass on board; the larger, several. On their arrival at Babylon, they dispose of all their cargo, selling the ribs of the boats, the matting, and every

thing but the skins which cover them; these they lay upon their asses, and with them return to Armenia. The rapidity of the stream is too great to render their return by water practicable. This is, perhaps, the reason which induces them to make their boats of skin rather than of wood. On their return with their asses to Armenia they make other vessels, in the manner we have before described*.”

* Beloe's version of this passage is incorrect, and, as the text of Herodotus is so critically exact, it is but justice to the father of history, to clear it of the unintentional misinterpretation of his translators and their followers in this essential passage; and to prove more fully and clearly that he had seen what he so exactly depicts.

It appears, that the force of his description and the error of his translators are to be found here; *νομέας ἵτεης ταμβρενοι ποιήσωνται, περιτείνουσι τούτοις διαφθέρας στεγαστρίδας ἔξωθεν, ἐδάφεος τρόπον*, whereby the historian seems to describe most correctly what is done at the present day. It may be thus rendered: “Having felled willow spars, they put them in order, and extended around them, outwardly, leathern bags (involucra vel segestria coriacea) as a substratum, or pavement.” This giving a pavement, or substratum

These kelleks were also used in the time of the younger Cyrus. Xenophon says, "In their march through the desert, they discovered a large, and populous city, called Carmande, where the soldiers bought provisions, having passed over to it upon rafts, by filling the skins, which they made use of for tents, with dry hay, and sewing them

of skins to a raft of willow spars tied tight together, has been misinterpreted willow ribs, covered with a coating of skins. At present, the trunk of the wild poplar is used, which is supported upon inflated bags of sheepskin, flayed with peculiar art. Differing as the explanation of this passage of Herodotus, as here given, does from the description of two modern scholars, celebrated for their knowledge of the dialect of their ancient original, it is, perhaps, necessary that the ground of difference or dissent should be explored. The authorities here relied upon, are the present method of construction of the vessel presumed to be alluded to by Herodotus, and the facility with which the interpretation herein adopted, may be derived from the meanings applicable to the words of the text. Had not the word "*νομέας*" once occurred in the chapter whence it was quoted, in a sense adverse to such a signification, it might have been interpreted "*campestris*," and "*agrestis*," as attributive of "*λιένς*" the willow; but it

together so close that the water could not get therein."

Spelman observes, in a note on this passage of Xenophon, that anciently, rafts of the kind here spoken of, were much used in passing rivers; and adds, "that Alexander passed several rivers in this manner, particularly the Oxus, in his victorious march through Asia." (Anabasis, b. i. p. 60).

has been translated by "ribs," and "costæ," derivable, I suppose, from "divido," one acceptation of "*νέμω*" the root, while ours would have flowed from "pasco," the other signification of the same. The term "*στεγαστρίδας*" is rendered by the word "bags," because "segestrium," or "segestre," its Latin equivalents, express something not remotely dissimilar to the term here used:—they mean ticken or linen, or leathern sack, which contains the stuffing of a mattrass or quilt particularly, as well as these last generally; they also signify the wrappers in which various goods are contained, or with which they are enveloped. Now, the leathern bags, or sacks, on which the spars of the raft rest, are precisely the same as those in which goods of various kinds are preserved by the Arabs of Mesopotamia to this very day.

In the passage of the Tigris by the ten thousand Greeks, a Rhodian offered to convey the troops across that river, in the following manner: “ I shall want,” said he, “ two thousand leather bags. I see here great numbers of sheep, goats, oxen, and asses; if these are flayed, and their skins blown, we may easily pass the river with them. I shall also want the girths belonging to the sumpter-horses; with these I will fasten the bags to one another, and, hanging stones to them, let them down into the water instead of anchors, then tie up the bags at both ends, and, when they are upon the water, lay fascines upon them, and cover them with earth. I will make you presently sensible that you cannot sink; for every bag will bear up two men, and the fascines and the earth will prevent them from slipping.”

At eight o’clock, we stopped at a caravanserai and received some water, for which the Arabs demanded money. About ten, we passed the remains of the lines thrown up by Nadir Shah, in the year A.D. 1735,

when the Persians besieged **Baghdad***. The view that presented itself to us on passing these mounds was very fine. The great capital, where once was seated the throne of the Arabian kaliphs, lay apparently in the centre of a vast plain, from which arose many a lofty minaret and stately mosque. To the right of the city, there suddenly appeared a luxuriant grove of date trees, from the centre of which the golden cupola of Kauzumeen, majestically glittering in the sun, was seen far above its feathering head. To the north, the plain was unbounded; and towards the east, a visionary lake, with its thin vapours floating over the city like sheets of transparent silver, reflected every surrounding object as in a mirror. At one o'clock, the celebrated city of Baghdad rose in sight with its towering citadel. The lovely groves of palms, beneath whose shade the

* When Tamerlane reduced Baghdad, he erected on its ruins a pyramid of ninety thousand heads. (Gibbon, chap. 65, vol. 6, p. 322).

Tigris was flowing, had for the last hour completely obscured that river; but now it was only partially hidden, until we crossed a dry ditch surrounding the city, and entered its lofty arched gateway, which was carved and enamelled in the arabesque manner.

CHAPTER III.

Baghdad—Daoud Pasha—Jew Brokers—Origin of Baghdad—Climate and Soil—Ladies of Baghdad—Persian Beauty—Eastern Head-dress—Jewellery—Chaders—Polygamy—Flight from the Plague—Arabian Cemetery—Irrigation—Rafts—Royal Canal—Ctesiphon—Palace of Kesra—Destruction of Ctesiphon.

ALTHOUGH the splendid palaces of Haroun al Raschid * and his beautiful Zobeïde belong to poetry, and exist only in the stories of the Thousand and One Nights, the surrounding country is indelibly marked with an imperishable interest, and forms a powerful contrast to the desolation in which the destroying influence of time has overwhelmed this seat of the ancient kaliphs. When viewed with reference to the events of the earliest history of the world, it is indeed a region of undying attraction both to the soldier and

* The ally of Charlemagne, the dread of the Romans, and the hero of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

to the antiquary. Like all other once brilliant cities in this devoted country, Baghdad has fallen from its ancient splendour, and suffered from the most dreadful visitations. At this day vast masses of ruin entirely impede the passage of most of the streets, and an aspect of misery hangs over this favourite scene of eastern romance. It is difficult to judge of its present population, as, from the disturbed state of the country, and the constant demand for troops by the pasha, it must greatly fluctuate: added to which, the majority of the inhabitants are either soldiers, or employed by the government, and always stimulated by the hope of plunder to engage in any quarrel. The present population may, however, be stated at eighty thousand as a maximum.

If we except Egypt, the pashalic of Baghdad is the most powerful and extensive throughout the wide range of the Ottoman empire, and Daoud Pasha resembles an independent sovereign rather than a sultan's representative. Like the

great Mahomed Ali of Egypt, he is determined to support a standing army, clothed and disciplined *à la Franque*; and has actually placed several hundred of his household troops under the immediate command of Mr. Littlejohn, who holds the rank of bimbashhee* in his service. He has even established a military arsenal within his citadel, and appointed a French officer (Monsieur de Marqué) its director. He casts cannon, and makes gunpowder—erects mosques, minarets, baths, and bazaars—and, with all his faults, has done more within the last ten years for the capital of the Arabian Irak, than any of his predecessors since the days of Haroun al Raschid.

Although very reluctant to acknowledge himself the slave of the “Vicar of the Prophet,” he is too knowing not to remember that *les rois ont les bras longs*. He therefore makes the best of it, and sends to Constantinople a very considerable annual tri-

* A Turkish colonel.

bute in specie*. The yearly confirmation, also, although a mere formal act, greatly increases his expenses, for to meet this demand he is obliged, through his shroffs or bankers resident at the Sublime Porte, to lodge other sums in the imperial coffers, which sums are invariably extorted from the Armenian and Jewish merchants on a *promise* of repayment. The duties derivable from the "goomruck," or custom and excise departments, together with the capitation tax from his Giaour friends, are secured with great avidity, lest a card of invitation to spend a day in the capital of the empire may unexpectedly arrive, which it would be the height of *impolitesse* not to accept. Hence, his cupidity and peculation. Then, again, the support of his "life guards" to repel the sudden riots of the Bedouins, who defy his authority† and plunder all the

* All pashas are obliged to plead poverty—to be a wealthy man in Turkey is tantamount to being covered with crime; it is the passport to decapitation.

† The most peaceful Bedouins even exact tribute from all the Turkish merchants, whenever their cara-

merchandise they meet, sometimes beneath the very walls of the city, is another great "drag" upon his purse.

The Jew brokers of Baghdad have a most comfortable creed; it entirely excludes the workings of that antiquated inconvenience called conscience. They are decidedly the greatest capitalists in the city, and are in immediate communication with the Arabs, who can afford to retail their booty at a "frightful sacrifice." A merchant has often an opportunity of purchasing his own long-cloths, silks, or shawls, as he passes along the bazaar, without having the satisfaction of "taking up" the receiver or the vendor of his goods, or, in fact, of obtaining the least redress. It is superfluous to add, that certain ruin must inevitably attend the Asiatic merchant, should he not be under the protection of the British authorities. The French *corps diplomatique* are mere ciphers here, possessing vans pass through their encampments. If ever the tribute money is withheld, the goods are seized.

little or no influence whatever with the pasha*.

Hamdallah Mustoufi, in his valuable geographical treatise, entitled *Nozhat ul Qulub*, gives the following account of this celebrated city. "Baghdad is the metropolis of the Arabian Irak, and a city of Islam, situated on the Dighlah (Tigris). In the age of the Kesras, there was on this site, on the western side, a village named Kerkh, founded by Shapoor Dhul Aktaf; and on the eastern bank the small town of Sabat, a dependency of Nahrawan.

"The kesra Anushirwan laid out ten parks and gardens in the open country in the vicinity, and called them Baghdad. By the Arabs it is called Kubbut úl Islâm. Al-

* The sultan has recently created two councils of state, and Daoud Pasha has been named president of the lower council, which is to meet at Constantinople. The object of the sultan in introducing this innovation in the administration, appears to be the securing a better control over the acts of his ministers than he has hitherto possessed.

mansoor Billah, the second Abbasside **khalip***, surnamed Abu Dewanik, founded the city in the year of the Hegira, 145; building chiefly on the western shore. His son, Mahdi Billah, fixed his seat on the eastern side of the river, and added considerably to the mass of edifices, which, in the reign of his successor, Haroun al Raschid, were increased to the extent of an area of four farsakhs by one and a half. His heir, Mootaim Billah, removed the capital to Samirah, to free the inhabitants from the violence of his Mamelukes.

“ His example was followed by seven of his successors, until, in the reign of Mootadhid Billah, the sixteenth Abbasside **khalif**, the seat of government was transferred to Baghdad, where all his successors have retained it. Mooktafi Billah, the son of the preceding,

* The Abbassides were the descendants of **Abbas**, the uncle of Mahomed. Almanzoor patronised astronomy, and was a great encourager of the arts and sciences. This city was their imperial seat for five hundred years.

founded the jamah on the eastern shore; and Moostadhir Billah surrounded it with a ditch, and wall of lime and kiln-bricks; the portion of which to the east, named Hara-mein, was eighteen thousand kams long, and had four gates:—the Khorasan, the Khilif, the Hatabiyah, and the Sook ul Sool-taun.

“ The western, or quarter of Kerkh, is guarded by a wall of twelve thousand kams; and most of the edifices of the city are of lime and burnt bricks.”

The author describes the air as good to strangers or natives; the inhabitants, and, particularly, the women, as fat, ruddy, and devoted to gaiety; cattle as thriving, but some kinds scarce; the pasturage excellent; the grain abundant, and highly nutritive; the soil rich and productive, rather more favourable for plants of warm than cold climates. He particularly alludes to the lofty stature which the *Tamarix orientalis* and the *Ricinus communis* usually attain in the genial soil of this country. Shrines, and tombs of holy

men, are abundant both in the city and in its immediate and more remote vicinity, but too numerous to be noticed in this place.

The ladies of Baghdad appeared to us to enjoy the same liberty of action as those of Tabriz; and were equally desirous of shewing their beauty. When they ride through the streets, they wrap themselves up in large silken chaders of various gaudy colours, and obscure their pretty faces with thin horse-hair veils, which fasten to the temples by two silver clasps. They also wear the yellow *hessian* boot, the slipper, and the trowser, of course. The veil should never be raised in the public street; though, how often are the laws of decorum transgressed, especially when they exchange *doux yeux* with the Franks. They consider their dress a very disagreeable one as compared to the costume of European ladies, and have long since voted a change, which, however, the Turks will not permit. It certainly must be a most uncomfortable garb for practising “equitation,” especially when we remember

that all these ladies ride not only *en cavalier*, but *à la planchette*.

Of all the women I have seen in this and other large Asiatic cities, the Persian are, in my opinion, the prettiest: and, although travellers extol the beauty of the Circassian ladies, I can affirm they do not approach the Persian, with whom every thing is the work of nature. A fine head of hair, which often reaches nearly to the ground, is the first care; the next point is the mouth—a woman to be thought pretty, *must* have “her mouth smaller than her eyes.” This is a proverbial expression, and if not quite correct, is not far from it. With all their good looks, however, the face is rather too round; but in Persia this is greatly admired, for the Persians always compare a pretty face to the “full moon*.” They do not paint, like many English ladies of my acquaintance, though they use a little soap to the

* To be admired by the Persians, a woman *must* have the eyes of a gazelle, the waist of a cypress-tree, and a face like the *full moon*.

cheeks, which is quite dry and innocuous in its effects, and which imparts a brilliant colour. I wonder they do not sell this "savon sans pareille" in London, for I am persuaded that Truefitt, Ross, or any other *artiste en cheveux*, would speedily make a fortune by the dowagers in Eaton and Belgrave squares *alone*.

In the harems of many of the government officers here, there are both Georgian and Circassian ladies, as well as Turkish and Persian. As they have no opportunity of seeing the *Journal des Modes*, or the "World of Fashion," they can take no hints on the important subject of female costume. Their head-dress is, however, very becoming. It consists of a Cashmere shawl turban, wound up in as elegant a manner as Madame Devey could arrange it, and ornamented with pearls, rubies, sapphires, and other precious stones.

The hair is plaited into several small tresses, some creeping through the folds of the turban, whilst others, *mignonnement engantelé*,

recline upon the bosom*. The rage for jewellery is such, that the wife of every poor artisan possesses some few amethysts and turquoise, or woe betide the unfortunate husband!

Osmanlee ladies of rank have a fortune in jewels alone, besides many sets of valuable ornaments, such as gold bracelets, necklaces, clasps, studs, and buttons—a sight of which would drive Rundell and Bridge mad with envy.

Embroidery is brought to great perfection by the ladies of the harems, and all articles of dress from Baghdad are highly prized throughout Turkish Arabia. The northern part of the town, which surrounds the palace of the pasha, is inhabited solely by Turks, who, from extreme jealousy about their women, prevent all Franks residing in that quarter, which is appropriated to themselves alone.

* In combing the hair, it was customary to sprinkle it with perfumes, and to dispose it in a variety of becoming forms. Richardson's Dissertation, p. 481.

Each trade has its separate bazaar; the market is most abundantly supplied, and is inferior to none throughout all Asia.

The poorer orders of females bustle about the city in common blue checked calico chaders, which they fold up above the hips, bringing a part before the face with the left hand, so as to leave only one eye uncovered; which, however, performs its duty for the other in a most efficient manner. They wear no veils; and when you meet them, the ugly ones cover themselves up, and make such a fuss about it, that they take especial care *their* faces shall not be seen, whilst the good-looking females pretend to be caught unawares, and the very way they contrive to trifle with their chaders, under the pretence of adjusting them, always displays their features to advantage.

The harems of the Baghdadees are separated from the house by an oblong court-yard, and are surrounded by a high brick wall, through which are bored small

round eyelet-holes, to enable the women to overlook their neighbours' harems; for

“ Sometimes they contain a deal of fun.”

Harems are not the prison-cages we fancy, but are often very extensive, and always beautifully arranged. Like all Orientals, the proprietors of them marry as many ladies as will accept them, in spite of all the precepts of the Koran.

An article on the Ottoman empire appeared in the Edinburgh Review for the month of January, 1830. In that number, containing a review of Mr. Madden's Travels in Turkey and Egypt, the following passage occurs in reference to polygamy and harems. “ We have been assured by a Persian gentleman, that, out of an extensive acquaintance, consisting of several hundred persons, he did not know in Persia ten who availed themselves of this corrupting and disastrous privilege.” Now, I can assert, from a residence of many years in Turkish Arabia, and from several visits made

into Persia, that I neither knew, nor heard of one single Mussulman in those countries, who did not draw on the Prophet for his full allowance of *four* wives, independently of slaves at discretion. It seems rather strange that the learned reviewer should have permitted himself to be so *gulled* by this “ Persian gentleman:” had he only concurred with Mr. Madden’s views of polygamy and harems, he would have been *critically* accurate.

After a long detention at Baghdad, we made arrangements to pass to the southward. The plague, with a rapid, steady, and fatal march, was consuming thousands of our fellow-beings, which was a sufficient warning for ourselves. With this “ notice to quit” constantly before our eyes, we embarked for the shores of the Persian Gulf, on a long, narrow, flat-bottomed vessel, so crowded with passengers that there was scarcely space enough for each to lie down: Mahomedan, Jewish, and Christian families were all huddled together like so many sheep in

an Indiaman's long-boat—all flying from the plague, and from the despotic acts of the pashas of Merdin, Mosoul, and Bagh-dad. They subsisted entirely on fried locusts.

Dropping down to Gurarah, we had a fine view of the cemetery of the Arabian kaliphate, in which so many Osmanlees were being daily deposited. Here were some superb tombs, near whose sacred walls the tall and dusky tamarisk waved its mourning branches. We parted at this spot from many a kind friend, who wished us a safe passage to India, and a speedy return to a city so celebrated for the nocturnal rambles of the Kaliph Haroun, and his old white-bearded Vizier Giaffer Barmeki.

Pursuing our voyage down the Tigris, towards Seleucia and Ctesiphon*, we were

* The celebrated city of Seleucia, whose ruins attest its former greatness, was founded and built by Seleucus Nicator, king of Assyria, one of the successors of Alexander the Great, in the year before Christ, 293. In the first century of the Christian era, it contained six

much annoyed by the ceaseless grinding of an immense number of rudely built water-wheels, such as I had formerly seen on the banks of the Euphrates, and still more recently on the Nile at Cairo, where, in a deep recess of brickwork, the water is raised by wheels, and small earthen jars. In some places large bags of hide were substituted for these jars, and the whole was worked by a couple of horses or buffaloes. The same mode of irrigation is carried on in Western India to this day.

Herodotus thus alludes to this mode of irrigation: "The Assyrians have but little

hundred thousand inhabitants. The Parthian kings transferred the seat of empire to Ctesiphon, on the opposite bank of the Tigris, where they resided in winter, and that city, formerly a village, became great and powerful. (See Pliny, lib. v. c. 26, and Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 743). Ctesiphon was thrice besieged, and thrice taken by the predecessors of Julian: and, when attacked by Julian, the anger of that emperor, and of his army, was not moderated, nor their cruelty abated, by the effectual resistance of the citizens of Ctesiphon against sixty thousand besiegers. (Gibbon, Vol. i. c. viii. p. 212).

rain ; the lands, however, are fertilised, and the fruits of the earth nourished by means of the river. This does not, like the Egyptian Nile, enrich the country by overflowing its banks, but is dispersed by manual labour, or by hydraulic engines." (Clio. cxc. iii.) Both the Euphrates and Tigris occasionally overflow their banks, but the inundation does not leave behind it any thick deposit of mud.

We noticed several Arabs crossing the stream on little fragile rafts, only just capable of containing the weight of a single person, without the least protection from the water, in which it was completely immersed. These rafts were steered along the stream by a small paddle, alternately shifted from side to side, like those used by the Esquimaux, as represented in the splendid engravings attached to Sir John Franklin's Journeys towards the North Pole.

Shortly after day-break, on the 15th of July, we passed the Nahar-Malcha, or " the

King's River*, which tradition has pointed out as the work of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon†: we also descried the ruined

* This royal canal runs close to an old site called "Coche"—"in confluente Euphratis, fossa perducta atque Tigris," says Pliny. It bears the name of Nahar Malcha, "quod significat fluvius regum." The emperors Trajan and Severus cleansed this canal for the passage of their fleets to the Tigris. Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxiv. cap. 6, says, Id, (viz. "flumen regium," which he also calls "fossile flumen"), antehac Trajanus, posteaque Severus, egesto solo, fodiri in modum canalis amplissimi studio curaverat summo, ut aquis illuc ab Euphrate transfusis, naves ad Tigridem commigraarent.

The Babylonian district, like Egypt, is intersected by a number of canals (Herodotus, Clio. exc. iii). Gibbon also says, the uses of these artificial canals were various and important: they served to discharge the superfluous waters from one river into the other, at the season of their respective inundations; subdividing themselves into smaller and smaller branches, they refreshed the dry lands, and supplied the deficiency of rain. They facilitated the intercourse of peace and commerce; and as the dams could be speedily broken down, they armed the despair of the Assyrians with the means of opposing a sudden deluge to the progress of an invading army.

+ "Nabocadnassar.—Les Arabes appellent ainsi

palace of Kesra, resting in silent majesty on the site of Ctesiphon, or Madâyen, as it is called by the Bedouins.

Hamdallah Mustoufi* says, that Madâyen is the work of Tahmurath Diyband, of the Pishdudi dynasty of Persian kings, who named it Gardabad. Jumshîd completed it, and called it Teisèboon. It is the largest of the seven chief cities of Irâk, and was thence called Madâyen. Its six rivals are Kadesiah, Rûmiah, Hirah, Bâbil, Hulwaun, and Nahrawaun; all of which are now in ruins. Jumshîd built a stone bridge over the Dighlah (Tigris), which excited the admiration of Alexander; but the succeeding

celui que nous appellons vulgairement Nabuchodonosor. Ce mot Arabe est assez conformé au nom que les Hébreux lui donnent. Les mêmes Arabes appellent plus ordinairement ce prince, qui étoit roi des Assyriens et des Babyloniens, Bokht, ou Bakht al Nassar, nom qui est aussi le plus en usage chez les Persans et chez les Turcs. Les historiens Orientaux, et principalement les Persiens, donnent aussi à ce prince les noms de Raham et de Gudarz.” (D’Herbelot, tom. iii. p. 1.)

* Nozhat al Qûlûb.

Persian race of kings destroyed this noble specimen of art*.

Ardashir Babigan, who improved the city and made it his capital, was desirous of restoring the bridge, but without effect; he consequently formed one of chains. The succeeding Kesras retained this city as their capital, which Shapoor Dhu'l Aktaf embellished,

* Abulfaraz relates, that Alexander of Macedon was the son of Olympia, the consort of Philip, by Nectane, king of Egypt; who, having been expelled from his throne by Artaxerxes Ochus, fled in the disguise of an astrologer, and took refuge in Macedonia. Nizami declares him to have been the son of Filikus, whose sway extended over the regions of Room and Roos, and whose residence was in Macedon and Yunan. He does not mention the name of his mother, but describes her as a lady of Philip's court, of surpassing beauty and majestic stature. Abulfaraz fixes the duration of Alexander's reign at twelve years—the author of the Tarikhi, Jewán-árá, at fourteen. The first nearly agrees with the calculation of Petavius, according to whom, Alexander

Was born	356 A. C.	Archon Elpines.
Philip died	336 A. C.	Archon Pythodorus.
11th year of Alexander	326 A. C.	Archon Anticles.
Alexander died July 29th	324 A. C.	Archon Hegesias.

He was the last of the 2nd, or Kaianian, dynasty of Persia.

and wherein Nushirwân erected the palace of Kesra, built of burnt bricks and lime; and to this time not a brick has been removed.

D'Herbelôt says, " Nos géographes modernes prétendent que cette ville est l'ancienne Ctesiphon; mais les historiens Persiens veulent, que Schabur, ou Sapor, surnommé Dhoulaktaff, c. a. aux épaules, l'ait fondé sous le nom de Madain, et que Khosroës, surnommé Nuschiruan, l'ait augmentée notablement, et embellie d'un superbe palais qui a passé pour l'ouvrage le plus magnifique de tout l'Orient. Ce palais, que les Orientaux appellent Thak Kesra, en Arabe, ou Thak Khosru, en Persien, c. a. La voute, ou le dome de Khosroës, fut pillé avec la ville, l'an 16 de l'Hégire, par Sâad, général du khalife Omar, après qu'il eut remporté la victoire sur les Persans dans la fameuse journée de Cadesie*."

The area of the building was a square of one hundred and fifty gaz; its principal hall was forty-two gaz in extent, eighty-two

* D'Herbelôt, p. 525.

long, and sixty-five high. Encircling it were smaller buildings and apartments worthy of the principal structure*.

Abu Dawanik, the khalifah, was desirous of removing the materials of this city for the use of his projected capital at Baghdad; Sooleiman ibn Khalid, his wazir, dissuaded him from this, saying, that he would be reproached by mankind, for the destruction of one city to aid in the foundation of another, as betraying a want of resources.

The monarch reprobated his minister's

* This magnificent monument of antiquity is to this hour in a wonderful state of preservation. It presents a front of three hundred feet, which is adorned with a quadruple row of arched recesses, with a central arch making a span of eighty-six feet, and rising to the height of one hundred and three feet. Walls of the thickness of sixteen feet support it, and lead to a hall, which extends to the depth of one hundred and fifty-six feet east and west. There were said to be under this palace of Chosroës a hundred vaults, filled with treasures so immense that some Mahomedan writers tell us, their Prophet, to encourage his disciples, carried them to a rock which, at his command, opened, and gave them a prospect through it of the treasures of Kesra. (See the Universal History)

lurking tenderness for the fame of the Kesra; and, commencing the work of destruction, soon found that the expense attendant on the disjunction and removal of the materials of the city would far exceed the cost of new preparations. He was now anxious to desist; but was reminded by the wazir, that having commenced, he should persevere, or he would be exposed to the imputation of being less powerful than the founders of the city. Sooleiman advised however, at the same time, that the arch should remain untouched, as a lasting evidence to mankind of the prophetic character of Mahommed, on the night of whose birth it was miraculously rent. Madâyen is now in ruins*.

* In the second century of the Christian era, the Romans penetrated as far as Madâyen. Gibbon says, "The sack and conflagration of Seleucia, with the massacre of three hundred thousand of the inhabitants, tarnished the glory of the Roman triumph." That city sunk under the fatal blow; but Ctesiphon recovered its strength to maintain a siege against the Emperor Severus, and to resist sixty thousand besiegers under Julian. (Gibbon, Vol. i. chap. viii. p. 212.)

CHAPTER IV.

Leave Ctesiphon--Selman's Tomb--Fleet of Boats--"Keep off"--Female Water-carriers--The River Hye--Koot al Hye--Ride over the Desert--Life in the Desert--Waasut--Antique Gem--Night in the Desert--Bedouin Camp--Sultry Atmosphere--Mahomedan Ablution--Custom House--The Euphrates--Sooksheek--Buffaloes--Extensive Camps--Arab Women--Land of Eden--Euphrates and Tigris--Canals and Marshes--Islands of Susiana--Rush Rafts--Tower of Dair--City of Omar--Arabesque Minaret.

As the breeze was fresh and fair, we soon passed Ctesiphon's mouldering walls, which are still to be seen upon the river's bank in all the silent gloom of utter desolation. On the western side, Seleucia is one confused heap of ruin; and on the eastern, stands the tomb of Selman the Persian*:-

* "Abou Abdalla Selman al Farsi, appellé aussi Selman Al Khair. C'est le nom d'un affranchi de Mahomet, qui étoit Persien de nation. L'on dit qu'il étoit Chrétien, et qu'il avoit lû les livres saints et voyagé beaucoup. Cependant, il fût des premiers et des plus considerables entre les Musulmans; ensuite que quelques-uns disent

Nearly opposite Selman's tomb a bend in the river occurs, which obliged us to make a circuit of several miles, although the neck of land was not more than a quarter of a

de luy que bana aleslam, c'est à dire, que c'est luy qui bâti le Musulmanisme.

“ Il y a dans la vie de Mahomet, que dans la journée du Khandak, c'est à dire, du fossé ou de la tranchée, Mahomet ayant assigné quarante brasses de terrain à creuser pour chaque dixaine d'hommes, chacun vouloit avoir Selman de son côté, à cause de sa vigueur; et les fugitifs de la Mecque d'un côté, et les auxiliaires de Medine de l'autre, étant divisez sur son sujet, Mahomet prononça ces paroles: ‘ Selman menna ahel albeit—Selman est à nous et de notre maison;’ et il ajoûta même: ‘ Vhou ahed alladhin eschtacat aliahem alginnat—et il est un de ceux que le Paradis désire, c'est à dire, du nombre des predestinez.’ ”

“ L'auteur du ‘ Raoudhat alakhiar’ rapporte, que Selman mourut dans la ville de Madain, capitale de la Perse, de laquelle Omar l'avoit fait gouverneur l'an 35 de l'Hégire, à l'âge de deux cent cinquante ans.

“ Le même auteur ajoûte, qu'il vivoit au travail de ses mains, et qu'il donnoit le surplus de ce qu'il gagnoit aux pauvres. Abou Horaïrah et Ans Ben Malek, deux personnages de grande autorité sur les traditions, avoient reçu les leurs de Selman, et Selman immédiatement de Mahomet.” (Oriental Dictionary of D'Herbelot, *in roce.*)

mile across. Taking advantage of this, I landed to bring away some bricks from Ctesiphon, and on my embarking them, a man tending his flocks came up and said—“Have you not even stones in your land, that you come here to carry away ours?” “Oh, yes, we have plenty; but I thought these of a better description.” “Indeed!” rejoined he, “then there can be no doubt you find gold in them.”

We met near this place a fleet of boats from Bassorah, laden with Bengal indigo, sugar, rice, shawls, long cloths, &c., for the Bagdad market—out two months. Every one of these vessels were laden far above the gunwale, on which a plank was fixed cemented together with bitumen. They were managed with great skill, for, whenever they obtained a slant of wind, they unfurled their large and graceful sails, and made the best of it. The surface of the desert was interspersed with sandy hillocks, spreading over a vast extent of the horizon; nothing was to be seen but mounds of barren sand: not even a blade of

grass or a date-tree could be traced. The very plants of this lonely waste appeared shrivelled and scathed. Yet, we saw some very beautiful butterflies, a great variety of birds of various coloured plumage, and several black-eyed gazelles.

During the night of the 17th, our bark made considerable progress to the southward, and before daybreak I landed to take my morning walk. After clearing some thick brushwood, I suddenly came upon a bed of "buteekhs," or water-melons (*Cucurbitae*). Two fierce-looking Arabs, armed with spears, suddenly sprang up from beneath a scarcely distinguishable knoll, and shouted out, in Arabic, "Rho hinnak! *Keep off!*" They had a fire lighted beneath the hillock, to scare away lions and wild boars, which here abound. On entering into conversation with them, they became civil, and one of them returned with me to the boat, bearing in his white woollen abbah a number of his large, refreshing "buteekhs." We then weighed, and

continued to descend the rushing stream with great rapidity. In the course of the day many extensive encampments were seen pitched on both banks. In the afternoon, we moored alongside one of them, for the purpose of obtaining some milk; the women scampered off on our approach, and evinced great shyness and timidity. The younger ones were employed carrying water from the river to their goat-hair tents in sheepskin mussels, or bags: they were all *en chemise*. This custom, so often alluded to in the Holy Scriptures, of females carrying water, prevailed from a period of the remotest antiquity and appears as prevalent now in these deserts as when Rebekah assuaged the thirst of the servant of Abraham.

“ And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for the goods of his master were in his hand and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

“ And he made his camels to kneel down

without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water*."

Shaw says, that in Barbary the women are obliged to go two or three miles with a pitcher or a goat's skin to fetch water.

The very young girls ran about *in puris naturalibus*, though some wore the usual blue cotton chemise, which was partially open, displaying the skin tatooed into various fantastic figures, which custom the Bedouin women fancy greatly enhances their charms in the eyes of their husbands.

As we continued to descend, the river was studded with small sandy islands covered with a low furze. On the 19th, we turned from the Tigris into a canal, called the "Shut al Hye," or the River Hye, which connects the two great rivers of Mesopotamia, and which appeared about as broad as the city canal at Blackwall. It is only navigable for five months in the year; and in August is

* Genesis xxiv. 10, 11.

nearly drained for the purposes of irrigation. We sailed through this canal for eleven hours, beneath the shade of a grove of turfahs, and then reached the hamlet of Koot al Hye. Here I made arrangements with the sheikh of the place, to accompany me to the ruins of Waasut, once the capital of southern Mesopotamia*. He produced some huge camels, as tall as a house. Taking with us three of his followers, we were in

* Vasseth, et Vassith. Nom d'une ville située sur le Tigre, entre celles de Coufah et de Bassorah, et c'est cette situation, au milieu de ces deux villes, qui luy donner ce nom. Elle fut bâtie par Hegiag, gouverneur de l'Iraque, sous le règne d'Abdal Malek, cinquième khalife de la race des Ommiades, l'an 83 de l'Hégire, selon Ben Schúhnah, ou 84, selon Khezdemir. (D'Herbelot.)

Ebn Haukal says, Waset is situated on the two banks of the Dejlah (Tigris). It has been built since the introduction of Islam. The foundation was laid by Hejaje Yusuf. It is strongly built; and the castle of Hejaje is there on the western side, with a few fields belonging to it. Waset is a populous town, and is well supplied with provisions; of a purer air than Basrah, the vicinity of it is well planted with gardens and well cultivated.

a few minutes on our way to this celebrated city. We goaded the animals into a reluctant canter; at first, we flew across the sands and herbage with rapidity, but the poor creatures soon relapsed into their ordinary gait. The pack-saddles added to our misery, for they were composed of bare boards with sharp wooden nobs, which galled and chafed us at every step. A canter over the desert on a fine Arabian horse, is indeed an indescribable pleasure: one's spirits exult at the seemingly interminable expanse, and stretch away into infinite space, as if disembodied from all earthly incumbrances, for—

“I love all waste
And solitary places; where we taste
The pleasure of believing what we see
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be.”

But the trot of a stubborn, stumbling camel is a very different description of enjoyment; and, being a formidable description of *monture*, a “*faux pas*” in this instance, as in

more serious cases, is without remedy: there is no possibility of bringing him up, so you must reconcile yourself, when you get on such vehicles, to all risks of breaking, at least, an arm or a leg. But, barring all apprehensions of danger, and all precautions for personal security, there is a feeling approaching to rapture in the independence of a desert life, which no one can imagine save those who have experienced it, and which I have always felt on finding myself amongst men who have received me with frankness and affability. The unanimity which prevails amongst the members of an Arab tribe, amply repay them for all their privations. A simple covering of goats' or camels' hair, which the desert Arab carries with him, serves to protect himself and family from the severity of the weather. Nothing bounds his desires; he can select the spot of earth he chooses, and, without being necessitated to distinguish property by its boundaries, he divides with his neighbour the pasturage of

the desert, for the nourishment of his innumerable sheep, goats, and camels.

Long after sunset, we reached Waasut. The surrounding country was an expanse of desolation—a vast sea without water—recalling to my mind the same desert waves which lie around the desolated heaps of fallen Babylon. No cultivation whatever was distinguishable; the only vegetation we could see consisted of a few shrivelled plants, some tufts of reedy grass, and a low furze, of which the camels ate abundantly. We found that the description of these plains, as given by Xenophon, was strikingly accurate. “The country was a plain throughout, as even as the sea, and full of wormwood: if any other kind of shrubs or reeds grew there, they had all an aromatic smell; but no trees appeared. Of wild creatures, the most numerous were wild asses, and not a few ostriches, besides bustards and roe-deer, which our horsemen sometimes chased*.”

* Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Book i.

We rested for the night in a miserable reed-hut, which could barely afford us shelter, and on the morrow commenced our survey of Waasut, which consisted of about forty or fifty wretched houses, built of mud and fragments of brick dug out of the ruins of the old city, which lay entombed beneath dark hillocks of sand. Around these spread a few monuments of former edifices, and an antique crumbling wall encompassing masses of decayed brickwork, where the ounce and the lion found a secure and seldom disturbed retreat. A more thorough change cannot be conceived than that which has occurred at Waasut. Its streets, once the scene of active commerce from every part of India, Persia, and Arabia, are now ploughed over by the Arabian fellah, and browsed by the flock of the shepherd. Its mouldering and time-worn buildings, merely whisper the tale of its celebrity, entombed as it now lies in a sepulchre rising around them by its own decay.

The unwillingness of my guides to remain

on this site, prevented my digging for any ancient fragments of statuary, inscriptions, or engraved gems, which are generally discoverable amongst the *débris* of all the Mahomedan cities that rose to eminence upon the decline of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. On my last visit to ancient Babylon, I found an intaglio, of which an enlarged representation is here given.



The approach of night was here indescribably beautiful: the expiring rays of the

sun stained the firmament with bright and lovely colours; and as he sunk beneath the desert, the whole sky blazed, and the western horizon continued brighter than molten gold. When the moon appeared with her silvery light, these gorgeous colours faded, and were succeeded by a few fleecy specks, which looked “like lambs grazing on the hills in heaven.”

Remounting our camels, we returned towards Koot. On clearing the low ridge of mounds immediately connected with the site of Waasut, we made for the Hye, and travelled by the large sparkling stars, which in this region are bright beyond expression. From their light, one might actually read the smallest printed volume. Diodorus Siculus expressly states, that travellers in the southern part of Arabia directed their course *by the Bears*, ἀπὸ τῶν Ἄρκτων* We passed many encampments, which were always pitched on the shelving sides of

* Lib. i. p. 156, edit. Rhodoman.

sand-hill, and immediately over a deep water-course. They all had troops of dogs for the protection of their flocks, whose incessant barkings at the sight of a stranger, preclude the possibility of an enemy taking them by surprise. The Bedouin camp, as well as the Koordish, is well watched by these raptacious animals. We reposed beneath the shelter of some tents, called "Boorkah," where our reception by the chief of the tribe was most cordial; he shook our hands, and then kissed us as the men do in France. He immediately killed and broiled a sheep. It was past midnight when we supped with him: the camel drivers also shared our meal.

Towards morning of the 22nd, we passed some ruined forts, around which were flocks of sheep and goats, some oxen, camels, and multitudes of jackals; which latter were always our constant companions: and so bold were they, a horseman might have easily ridden them down. At sunrise we found ourselves in the immediate vicinity of the Hye; and, on rejoining our

boat, unmoored again, and glided through the canal as swiftly and smoothly as if we had been on board of a Richmond steamer. We constantly saw several herds of buffaloes driven into the water, through which they swam to the islands scattered throughout different parts of its stream. These little spots are submerged at the season of increase, and no sooner dry than they become clothed with the greenest swards. The air was insupportably sultry throughout this whole tract:

“ It was so calm, that scarce the feathery weed
Sown by some eagle on the topmost stone,
Swayed in the air.”

Our thermometer stood at 108° of Fahrenheit within the cabin, although we were beneath the shade of an Athul or turfah grove, which literally swarmed with nightingales. The nackodah, or captain of the boat, frequently called his crew to prayer, in which our Mahomedan passengers joined. Their simple sincerity made —

deep impression on me; indeed, nothing can be more exemplary than the attention with which they perform their public worship. Among other indispensable rules of their faith, ablution is one of the chief. This rite is divided into three kinds. The first is performed before prayer. It commences by washing both hands, and repeating these words:—"Praise be to Ullah, who created clean water, and gave it the virtue to purify: he also hath rendered our faith conspicuous." Water is then taken in the right hand thrice, and the mouth being washed, the worshipper subjoins:—"I pray thee, O Lord, to let me taste of that water which thou hast given to thy Prophet Mahomet in Paradise, more fragrant than musk, whiter than milk, sweeter than honey; and which has the power to quench for ever the thirst of him that drinks it." After some water has been applied to the nose, the face is washed three times, and behind the ears: water is then taken with both hands, beginning with the right, and thrown to the

elbow. The washing of the head next follows, and the apertures of the ears with the thumbs; afterwards the neck with all the fingers, and finally the feet. In this last operation it is sufficient to wet the sandal only. At each ceremonial a suitable petition is offered, and the whole concludes thus: “ Hold me up firmly, O Lord! and suffer not my foot to slip, that I may not fall from the bridge into hell *.”

We now reached a custom-house, where a

* This bridge is in the Arabic language called “Ul Sirat.” It is supposed to span the infernal regions, is represented as narrower than a spider’s web and sharper than the edge of a sword. Though the attempt to cross it be

“ More full of peril, and advent’rous spirit,
Than to o’erwalk a current roaring loud
On the unsteady footing of a spear,”

yet the Paradise of Mahomet can be entered by no other avenue. Those, indeed, who have behaved well need not be alarmed; mixed characters will find it difficult; but the wicked soon miss their standing, and plunge headlong into the abyss. (Habesci. Pocock in Port. Mos. p. 282.)

walled village was situated, and moored for the night at a short distance from the bank, so as to prevent the intrusion of the curious of both sexes. An officer, however, boarded us: I filled his pipe from my own tobacco-bag, and he thanked me for a luxury he declared he had not enjoyed for many a long day. He complained sadly of the despotism of the chiefs of tribes, declaring that the whole pashalic was under the pressure of a triple harrow. "Would to God," he said, "the English would invade our country; with what joy every soul of us would flock to their standard, and massacre our despoilers!" On his returning to the shore, I gave him a bag of coffee, some dates, and a couple of chiboukes.

July the 23rd—An easterly wind springing up sent us spanking along at such a rate, that we entered the Euphrates at eight o'clock in the morning, and passed villages embosomed amidst date-palms. The plain towards the great west on our right was rich and deep, v

loamy soil, and clothed with a verdant carpet. It was farmed by Aajeel, the chieftain of the powerful tribe of Montefikh*, where the fixed villages are obliged to give an unlimited credit to his soldiers, whose depredations are, of course, clear gains to them.

At noon, we moored off the town of Sooksheook (the sheikh's bazaar), which stands on the western bank of the Euphrates: all the inhabitants turned out to see us, for they are so seldom visited by Europeans of any description, that the arrival of an English lady and children excited every one's attention. The circumstance of our visit must have afforded them a topic of conversation for many days.

Our nackodah and his crew insisted on

* The great Montefikh tribe occupy the right bank of the Euphrates from the town of Samayah to the sea and along the Hye canal to the ancient capital of southern Mesopotamia. Aajeel, if pressed, could bring twenty thousand well-armed men into the field. **III** has at least five thousand horsemen.

opping here to change their boat, as well as to purchase pipes and coffee for their own private use. To this delay I was obliged to submit, although we were put to great inconvenience, and lost three hours of the fairest breeze. During this detention, we saw men crossing the stream on trusses of straw, with buffaloes swimming before them. One held the animal's tail with his left hand, and guided it by a cord fastened to its horns with the right, whilst his companions steered with oars, and thus preserved the balance of this simple bark. Young lads were observed swimming across with herds of oxen before them; and there was something interesting in the manner in which they also guided these animals through the water, waving to the foremost with their sticks, and pointing out their true course.

Nearer the bank, herds of buffaloes were enjoying their favourite pleasure of immersion up to their heads. These animals are amphibious, and, whilst on

shore, nearly madden from the eternal sting of a disagreeable insect that exists on their bodies. They make a peculiar lowing while immersed, expressive of the great pleasure they enjoy. Upon their sharp pointed horns the crows delight to perch. I do not distinctly remember at this time, whether any traveller has noticed, that on the banks of all the rivers in this country these birds are *gray*—even on the banks of the Araxes a black crow was a *rara avis*.

At three o'clock in the afternoon the breeze got light, but the current was sufficiently strong to carry us at the rate of four miles an hour. The periodical rise had this year been unusually rapid, and the river's channel was now wide and deep. In the month of October, the Euphrates is at its lowest ebb, and from that time to the end of March has many shallows. On both sides, we passed the extensive camps of the Montefikh Bedouins, who were watching their flocks and herds; their horses and asses were picketed near their tents, which

is always done by fastening their hind legs to a rope attached to an iron-ringed peg driven into the ground; but their camps were never secured. All these camps were constantly on the move from place to place, ever ready for attack and defence, and during their wars even, the combatants are surrounded by their women, and are as solicitous to feed their flocks as to engage the enemy.

The women that we saw on the banks of this stream had the blue chemise descending below the knee, with a multitude of silver rings pending from the ears; and round their necks hung various colour-ed beads intermixed with silver coins. All of them wore their hair plaited like the thong of a whip, had tattooed chins, and some few were similarly marked between the eyebrows, and around the neck. A young Arab girl is not all bad looking, but nothing can exceed the disgusting appearance of the old women. Both sexes use “*kahel*” to their eyelids, and wear a

or charms against all disorders and misfortunes.

Those women who belong to the pastoral tribes never attempt to hide the face; it is only the fixed villagers who are so fastidious; and yet, I have seen these very damsels washing their clothes on the banks in perfect nudity; and, when surprised, have actually covered their faces with their hands, disregarding all other exposure. The abbahs of the men had white and brown stripes passing vertically down them; this cloak serves them by day and night, as they never unclothe. They make them of goat's or camel's hair; and, when a purchaser tests them, he fills them with water, and, should a single drop escape, after a duration of a quarter of an hour, he would reject them as being imperfect.

The banks now became nearly on a level with the surface of the stream, and highly cultivated to its brink. The date groves thickened, and the villages had more num-

is inhabitants. On the 25th, we were visited by a Turkish brig riding at anchor off Soorna; she belonged to the Bassorah government, and was placed here to put down piracy, for which service she was eminently *unfitted*.

Having reached the southernmost point in Mesopotamia, formed by the conflux of the Euphrates and Tigris, we had, as the prophet Joel says, "the land of Eden before us, and behind us a desolate wilderness*." Hale, in his *New Analysis of Chronology*, says, "It should seem that Paradise lay on the confluent stream of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, but principally on the eastern bank, which divided into two branches above the garden, and two more below it. From the description of these rivers by ancient historians and geographers, Major Rennel infers, that in ancient times they preserved distinct courses to the sea, until the reign of Alexander; although, at no

* Joel ii. 3.

great distance of time afterwards, they became united and joined the sea in a collective stream. The Cyrus and Araxes also kept distinct courses in ancient times. This, however, does not invalidate a primeval junction of these rivers before the deluge, which certainly produced a prodigious alteration in the face of the primitive globe. The changes in the beds of other great rivers, such as the Nile, the Ganges, and Barampooter, even in modern times, are known to be very great."

Beyond Koorna, the eastern shore of the "Great River of Scripture*" was low and swampy until we passed the mouth of the Kerkha, or Howaizah river†, at the hamlet

* In Scripture history it appears that the Euphrates was thought superior to the Nile, for we read in the book of Genesis, that "the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the *great* river, the river Euphrates." (Genesis xv. 18.)

† So called from a town situated on the banks of the above named river. The town is raised on the site of a more ancient place.

of Suaeb, where a date grove commences, and extends to the canal of Al Hid, which flows from the Tigris into the Kerkha, through groves of a species of calamus, growing luxuriantly in a low tract of country, between the Tigris and the Kerkha, inundated by the overflow of the former. On the subject of the canals and marshes of this region, an apposite quotation may be gleaned from a Persian biographical work, entitled *Megalis al Moumenin*. The author of the *Moajun* (the celebrated Yacuti of Harna, the geographer) remarks of Howaizah, that it is the diminutive of Houzah, which signifies "collected, or brought together." This district was peopled and organised by Amir Dabis-ebn-Ghadhb, the nsadi, in the khalifat of Tayaa-lillah, who here formed colonies of his tribe and dependants. This Dabis is of the same tribe and name, though not the same individual, as the one who founded the town of Hillah, on the Euphrates. Hawaizah is placed between Waasut, Bassorah, and

Khuzistan, in the midst of lakes and marshes which were formed by the inundation of the Tigris, in the time of Kesra Parviz.

The same author also remarks, that the islands of Susiana are considered to form a part of this district. He enumerates three hundred and sixty distinct villages, the capital of which was named Madinah. They produced rice, dates, silk, oranges, limes, grapes, fish, and game in abundance. The inhabitants, who are Shiah, are very numerous, warlike, highly superstitious, and notoriously predatory and revengeful.

The opposite or western bank was covered with an uninterrupted grove, with large clusters of huts peeping through it, and is distinguished by the appellative "Shamaul," or north-western district. It comprehends many villages: as Robat, Dan, Nohar Omar, and Shirsh. It is said to be pierced by at least three hundred canals and water-courses, among which are Nohar Salah, Fathiyah, Batinah, and others, which we cannot here

enumerate*. Towards nightfall we passed a long, low island, on a level with the stream, which during the springs must be entirely submersed. Several fellahs had passed to it upon a stratum of rush, which they were loading with grass to carry down towards Bassorah for sale. May not these be similar to the "vessels of bulrushes upon the waters," alluded to by Isaiah (xviii. 2)? We also saw numerous square enclosures, consisting of reeds placed in the mud close together, and extending a few yards from the shore, for the purpose of catching fish: they formed a labyrinth terminating in a death-chamber, whence the fish are taken at pleasure.

There are two kinds caught here by the Arabs:—one they call Ull-Bore, the other Ull-Benny. Although very bony, we thought

* Towards Babylon and Seleucia, where the rivers Tigris and Euphrates swell over their banks and water the country, the same kind of husbandry is practised as in Egypt, but to better effect and greater profit. The people here let in the water by sluices and flood-gates as they require it. (Pliny, Nat. Hist. Book xviii. cap. 18.)

them good eating. Here also were rice grounds, embanked from the river by low mud walls. They can be laid under water at the discretion of the cultivator. Whole fields of lucerne waved beautifully along the banks, which sometimes yield *eight* crops in the year.

A little below this spot, we passed the village and tower of Dair, very prettily situated on the margin of the stream, and embosomed amidst tamarisk trees. The Arabian historian Fath Ullah, in his history of modern Bassorah, entitled *Zad ul Moosafir*, written upwards of a century and a half ago, speaks of Dair, as a town north-west of Bassorah, remarkable for a tower of such colossal dimensions and beautiful structure as to appear to be the work of genii; and Ibn ul Wardi, in addition to a similar account, says, that strange sounds are occasionally heard to proceed from the interior of this tower. Great antiquity is attributed to this minaret by all the natives of the country.

The hamlet of Maghaul is marked out by a large mud walled house standing on the river's margin, and exhibiting the appearance of a "nunnery." It has been recently erected by the political resident in Turkish Arabia, and is occasionally occupied by him as a country seat. The distance by land from this to Bassorah is about seven miles. The traces of the canal of Obillah, the Apologus of Arrian and Nearchus, may yet be traced from this neighbourhood, almost as far as the vicinity of Zobair, which town stands at the distance of eight miles to the south-west of the present Bassorah, and is the site of the ancient city of Omar, where may still be seen the mosque of Ali (not the Barmecide), the nephew of Mahammed.

Five miles below Maghaul, and on the same side of the stream, a minaret marks the entrance to the Bassorah Khore, or creek. This arabesque minaret rises in the form of a spire, like the tomb of Haroun al Raschid's consort on the western bank of

the Tigris, at Baghdad. We anchored near the mutesellem's (governor) guard ship, and found the "Hydery" of Calcutta, and the "Sophia" of Bombay, moored in five fathoms at high-water mark.

CHAPTER V.

Bassorah—Its Commerce—My Ascent of the Euphrates—Expensive Interment—Sacred City—Projected Survey of the Euphrates—District of Junub—Canal of Hafar—The Karoon—Maritime Arabs—Arrival at Bushire—Trade of Bushire—Trade of the Persian Gulf—Ophthalmia—Abdul Russool—Women of Bushire—Persian Tobacco—The Muezzins—Russian Ambition.

BASSORAH is the principal inlet from the Persian Gulf, through which all eastern productions find their way into the Turkish empire. Although its commerce is at present inconsiderable, it would be immense were only the rich and extensive countries traversed by the Euphrates and Tigris inhabited by a civilised and industrious people. Its imports from Europe are by the way of Beirut, Haleb (Aleppo), and Baghdad—from India, *via* Muscat and Bushire. From Persia it imports shawls, carpets, and jewels; from Bahrain, pearls; and from Mocha, slaves and coffee. Its exports are bullion, copper (from

Asia Minor), raw-silk, horses, gall-nuts, and a great variety of drugs. The export of dates alone exceeds twelve thousand tons per annum. The trade with the interior of the country is not conducted by caravans, as formerly, Baghdad now being the emporium whence all the kafilahs start. Commerce might, however, be carried on to immense advantage by means of a few small iron steamers.

I hope I shall not be indicted for “*crimen læsæ majestatis*,” if I state in this place, that when I commanded the escort attached to the political resident in Turkish Arabia, and with views precisely assimilating with those subsequently adopted by Colonel Chesney *, I ascended the Euphrates (May

* In a letter to me on this subject, Colonel Chesney thus expresses himself: “I claim nothing before 1830. Any voyage made by you previously must have been the very *first* in modern times.” The reader will presently see, that even the *official* reply of the East India Company to my application to survey the Euphrates, was dated as early as 1829.

1826) accompanied by my family, in a yacht belonging to the British residency, and visited many of the desert tribes that periodically frequent its banks, from whom we experienced much attention and hospitality. The only instance of hostility to which we were ever subjected, was on a more recent voyage (September 1826) upon the Karoon, at the village of Weiss, beyond the ruins of Ahwaz, and near to the site of ancient Susa, where an armed body of Persians assembled and molested our trackers, not however by any acts of open violence, but by intimidating menaces and gestures, repeated with such frequency that they refused to proceed further, so that we were at length compelled to return again to Ahwaz, Mahumrah, and Bassorah.

In 1827, I repeated the ascent of the Euphrates in a boat of the country, as far as Hit, which is upwards of seven hundred miles from the sea; and in the following year, I visited the whole of Southern Mesopotamia, and a great portion of Arabia border-

ing the Euphrates, including the towns of Zobair, Semawah, Roomaheyyah, Sorah, Kufa, Hira, Hillah, Hit, Kerbela, Messhed Houssain, and Messhed Ali. These last-named towns are in the eyes of all the tribe of Sheeah rendered sacred by the memory of two of the greatest martyrs of that sect*.

I found Messhed Ali governed by a *zâbit*, who was in subjection to the pasha of Bagh-dad, and paying his highness an immense annual revenue for the privilege of "fleecing" those pilgrims who bring hither for interment dead bodies, even from India and other distant parts of the East. The method of disposing of these corpses is deserving of some notice. Those pilgrims who can only afford a limited donation for the supposed salvation of the departed, are, as in other countries nearer home, neglected, or, as the saying

* It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader, that the Mahomedans are divided into two hostile sects, "Soone," and "Sheeah." The former hold that Osman was the lawful successor of the Prophet; whilst the latter assert that he was an usurper, and that Ali was the next in succession.

is, "looked down upon," and the defunct is, consequently, thrown headlong into a deep well dug expressly for the purpose, after the manner of the parsee burial-places in Bombay, Surat, Broach, and other stations of Western India, where these stock-jobbing gentry are located. But those relations whose offerings are liberal at the tomb of their patron saint, get their dead easily interred, until others equally rich and ambitious for a sacred spot arrive, when the remains of the first are unceremoniously exhumated and cast into the well, to make room for those of the second. The Soonnite inhabitants are extremely jealous and uncivil to strangers, and no Christian is knowingly admitted within the city walls. Colonel Lockett, of the Bengal army, and myself, are, I believe, the only Englishmen who ever visited this sacred city.

In the year 1828, I returned to England by the way of Asia Minor, Persia, Russia, and Germany, never doubting for a moment that, in the event of any of the officers in the

Honourable East India Company's service being appointed to examine the rivers of Turkish Arabia, I should be associated with them, and this inference was materially strengthened by the result of several interviews with Mr. Peacock, who was at the head of the Examiner's Office, East India House. This gentleman took the warmest interest in the whole subject, and he led me to infer that, if I could only defer my departure for the East until the fall of the year 1829, I might obtain the employment I had for so many years anticipated. I did so; and in the interim sent off the whole of my baggage to the Mediterranean, through the hands of Mr. Parbury, of Leadenhall-street, and neither he nor myself have since been able to learn any tidings of it or of the little "Daphne," which vessel conveyed it hence towards the Syrian coast. When, however, I officially applied for an extension of my furlough, for the purpose of taking a survey of the Euphrates, how great was my disappointment, to find that my wishes could

not be complied with, notwithstanding the fact of my having given up my staff appointment in Turkish Arabia, and with it the *whole* of my pay and allowances from the very day on which I quitted the residency gates at Bassorah for Europe—neither did I, on the occasion of making the application, solicit any emolument or remuneration whatsoever, nor have I since received on this account a single fraction, either by way of salary, allowance, pecuniary present, or recompense of any sort or kind*.

* The official letter, refusing me leave to examine the Euphrates, ran thus:—

“ *East India House, 2nd Oct. 1829.* ”

“ **SIR**,—The Court of Directors of the East India Company have considered your letter, adverting to the permission you have received to return to your duty overland, and requesting that your furlough may be extended for twelve months, to enable you to survey the Euphrates with a view to steam navigation, and I am commanded to acquaint you, that the Court have declined to comply with your present application.

(Signed) “ **P. AUBER, Secretary.** ”

“ **Captain R. MIGNAN.** ”

Having obtained the permission of the Court of Directors to return to my duty abroad, I waited upon Mr. Auber, then Secretary at the East India House, to receive the necessary certificates and to make my bow, when he assured me, that my application to survey the Euphrates was negatived from political motives only, and that, in the event of any expedition being sent to the Euphrates, the government of India would be the engine to set it in motion. I therefore determined that, whenever circumstances should again present a favourable opportunity, my application should be renewed.

Accordingly, I proceeded to Tabriz, by the route described in the foregoing pages, furnished with credentials from Lord Heytesbury and other distinguished noblemen to Sir John Macdonald Kinneir, then our ambassador in that country, who took the greatest interest in our proceedings, and who advised my going on to Baghdad, where, by the assistance of the political resident, I

could mature my plans. In this city I was detained for months by reiterated assurances of official employment, when the unexpected arrival from Calcutta of the resident's brother, caused an instantaneous revolution in the resident's intentions regarding me. I was then indulged with a *petite entrée*, and most unceremoniously told that I might return again to England, or to Persia, or to India, as my services would not be required —his highness the pasha of Baghdad having granted to Mr. James Taylor *only*, the privilege of surveying and navigating the rivers of Mesopotamia. This gentleman proceeded *en route* for Europe, to make arrangements for carrying into effect the plans he had formed with his brother, for the establishment of a steam intercourse between India and Turkish Arabia; but he had advanced as far as the small desert that between Mosoul and Nisibin, when him and two other of his companions (Aspinall and Bowater) were ~~murdered~~ murdered by a body of savage Ko-

On my reaching Bombay, the governor, Sir John Malcolm, directed me to throw into the form of a written application the nature of the employment I solicited, and that he would immediately acquiesce thereto; but no sooner had I done so, than I received a demi-official note from Lieutenant-Colonel Aitchison, then Adjutant-General of the Bombay army, to attend at his office, when and where I was informed that if I failed to proceed to rejoin my regiment, then stationed at Deesa, a distance of full five hundred miles from the presidency, in a certain given time (about forty-eight hours), he would place me under close arrest.

In a statement of this description, it would be almost impossible to enter into a detail of all the extraordinary circumstances which marked the course of certain proceedings taken against me, for having expressed my desire to make a survey of the Euphrates; but it is sufficient for my present purpose simply to relate, that *thus* was I finally disposed of, after having acted

pro tempore as political resident in Turkish Arabia, at a period of some difficulty and danger, (during the disturbances of 1826, in the city of Bassorah)—devoted my time and means towards the advancement of discovery in that most interesting country—traversed Babylonia and Chaldaea *on foot*—the shores of the Persian Gulf on both sides—Persia from one extremity to the other—Koordistaun, Khuzistaun, and the whole of Southern Mesopotamia. During this period, my staff salary amounted to thirty rupees *per mensem*, or thirty-six pounds English money *per annum*, a sum which a young cadet of only a few weeks' service with a native infantry regiment enjoys, under the head of “Company allowance!”

I crave the reader's pardon for this digression, and for having obtruded upon his notice such an egotistical narration, which, assuredly, would have been omitted *in toto*, had I possessed any other means of making known the real facts of the case, as far as I

am personally concerned. But my name having been publicly introduced before a committee of the House of Commons, in a manner which implied that I had been instructed by the Court of Directors of the East India Company to survey the Euphrates, I feel it due to myself to offer this *exposé* on my own behalf, and to add my conviction that if I had only the good fortune to have belonged to the "Royal" instead of the "Local" army, I might (Colonel Chesney himself did so in the *first* instance) have taken a survey of the Euphrates without even asking or receiving the permission of either the British government or the Court of Directors of the East India Company.

As the ship "Sophia," belonging to Arab merchants, was on the eve of her departure for Bushire, we transhipped our baggage, and at four o'clock on the afternoon of the fourth of August, weighed, and dropped down the river, passing the district of Junub, or South, which comprehends innumerable

noble canals and populous villages between Bassorah and the sea, on the south-eastern shore of the Shut-ul-Arab*. The successive order of the principal villages is this, commencing from Bassorah:—Minávi, Serraji, Hamdan, Yusafáy, Abul Khasib, Nafali, Zan, Khist, and Shabbani, which is the last of the flourishing dependencies of Bassorah. The tract called “Dubbah” commences to the south of these hamlets, and by our nautical men is called “the tombs,” from two spire-topped mosques, which are seen peeping through the trees and within a hundred yards of the river.

We soon came abreast of Ras Zaine, opposite to which on the eastern or left bank is the canal of “Hafar,” leading into the Bamishere arm of the Shut-ul-Arab, as also into the noble river Karoon. The appellative “Bamishere” has been given by

* “It is said that the rivers or streams of Bassorah were counted in the time of Belal-ibn-Ali Bordeh, and amounted to the number of one hundred and twenty thousand streams.” (Ebn Haukal).

the Arabs to one of the seven mouths of the Euphrates. It is navigable for vessels of a small draught of water either into the Karoon, by the right, or the Shut-ul-Arab, by the Hafar canal on the left. The only entrance now taken by large ships bound up to Bassorah, is called after that city, "Khore Bassorah." Ships of seven hundred and twenty tons burden can effect their passage through it.

Upon the north-western point of the Delta thus formed by this canal between the Bamishere and the Shut-ul-Arab, the town of Mahumrah is situated, which belongs to the Chaub Sheikh, whose principality is quite independent of the Mutessellim of Bassorah, or the Turkish Arabian government.

The Hafar is most undoubtedly a canal of great antiquity, as it was by this channel that Alexander sent his fleet when he descended from Susiana to the head of the Delta, and thence by the Euphrates to the sea.

In the year 1826, when on a journey to the ruins of Ahwaz, in the Persian province of Khuzistan*, I sailed through the Hafar, and examined it so narrowly that I have no hesitation in declaring it to be an artificial work. The natives will not for a moment admit the notion; they insist that it is a natural passage as old as the creation; and certainly a superficial examination of this canal would easily impress any person with the same idea, as nothing is more likely

* The reader is referred to the pages of the second volume of the transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, for an account of my tour and operations in this province. With the exception of Seistan, it is the most interesting in Persia. To the antiquary in particular, it presents so many objects of the greatest interest in the ancient remains at Ahwaz, Shuster, Susa, and Dezfool. It has also the additional claim of possessing the last remnant of the Chaldees and Sabaeans, the oldest people upon earth.

A Persian dictionary, under the words "Khuz" and "Khuzistan," states that these are both names of a country in Persia of which Shuster is the capital; the first signifies, also, sugar; and the second, any country productive of the sugar cane; or a manufactory of this article.

than for a large, broad, and deep canal to assume the appearance of a natural stream after such a lapse of time. In support of the opinion I have above advanced, I may adduce its present appellative "*Hafar*," which is an Arabic verb signifying "to dig, or turn up the earth," and is applicable to any artificial excavation. Its banks are lined with groves of date trees, where hogs, partridges, wild ducks, and snipes, abound. The Karasoo (the Choaspes of the ancients) mixes its waters with this stream, and by the natives is considered the purest that can be found throughout the East. It is without exception the clearest of all the rivers in Turkish Arabia, for, if a vessel is hastily filled with the water of the Karoon, no sediment or discoloration is observable; whereas both the Tigris and Euphrates leave a thick deposit of mud.

In ancient times the monarchs of Parthia are said to have drunk the water of this river only. Herodotus, Strabo, Tibullus, and others, call it *βασιλικὸν ὕδωρ*, *regia lympha*,

and the first historian says, "There is also carried with him (Cyrus) water of the river Choaspes, which flows near Susa, for the king drinks of no other*." Milton thus alludes to it—

"There Susa by Choaspes' amber stream,
The drink of none but kings†."

The illustrious Arabian geographer, Abulfeda, in his chapter on rivers, says, that "the Karoon nearly equals the Tigris in breadth; its banks are adorned with gardens and pleasure-grounds, and enriched by extensive plantations of sugar cane, and other valuable productions of the vegetable kingdom‡."

Muttowah Islet lies immediately opposite the Delta, and its produce is fully fifteen fold. Beyond this we passed the hamlet of Sihhan, where two large channels lead into the interior, and overflow the whole country. These channels have no outlet, nor are they

* Clio, clxxxvi.

† Paradise Regained, Book ii.

‡ Abulfeda *Takwin ul Bildan*; cap. *De Fluviiis*.

navigable for the smallest boats. The villages of Khast and Mehellah stand close upon the margin of the stream, surrounded with fine pasturage for sheep and cattle. The Arabs here are tall and athletic, and many of them have very handsome countenances. Their complexions are dark from constant exposure to the sun, and from not being very particular in their ablutions. They never shave the head, but plait their hair in long tresses that hang on each side of the face, and sometimes reach down to the breast. They are capable of enduring the greatest fatigue, and half a dozen of them think nothing of tracking a deeply laden boat up to Bassorah. At this point the banks of the Euphrates become perfectly barren, and level with the water's edge. Hence to the sea, we could scarcely discern the land.

On the morning of the sixth, we stood over the bar at the mouth of the Shut-ul-Arab in very shoal water (about two fathoms and a half), and, bearing away with a fine north-westerly breeze, anchored in the inner

harbour of Bushire at three o'clock on the afternoon of the seventh: H. M. ship "Challenger," commanded by Captain Charles Fremantle, was lying in these roads. We found Colonel Wilson, the resident, Captain Hennell, his assistant, and Dr. Riach, their medical officer, at the British residency, all of whom warmly welcomed and hospitably entertained us.

The general effect of Bushire (the Mesambria of Nearchus and Arrian) is widely different to that of Bassorah. It is situated at the northern extremity of a low sandy peninsula, impregnated with saline matter, and entirely denuded of vegetation save a few thorny shrubs and salt water plants. The mountainous ridges of Persia, at a distance of forty-five miles from the town, rise to an elevation of two thousand feet above the plain. That portion facing the sea is not uninviting, but on the land side, it has a miserable appearance, and the houses being of clay, or of a soft sandy stone incrusted with shells, look as if they were

only half finished. The streets and bazaars are very inferior to those of Bassorah, and the number of inhabitants are at least one-tenth less, although the trade of both are most intimately connected.

The population of this sea-port constantly fluctuates, but Colonel Wilson estimates it at about twenty thousand. The imports and exports are very similar to those of Bassorah. Of the latter, raw silk is, perhaps, the most important. Every province throughout Persia produces some. Gheelan alone yields nine hundred thousand pounds of this article. The wines of Ispahaun and Shirauz enjoy a well-merited celebrity. Of the tobacco I have already spoken, and the yellow berries used in dyeing fetch immense prices in all European markets. The importation of copper from the Persian Gulf to India, is valued at thirty thousand pounds sterling per annum. This copper is partly the produce of the mines in Asia Minor. The total value of the entire trade between the Persian Gulf and the whole of India, amounts to at least one million

annually. Of this amount Bombay participates to the greatest extent, then Calcutta, and, lastly, Madras. The late Sir John Malcolm wisely suggested that the permanent possession of the island of Karak, which is within forty miles of Bushire, would be an object of considerable importance, as its possession would not only have enabled us to command the navigation of the Gulf, but it would form a depot where goods destined for both Persia and Turkish Arabia might be warehoused in safety and convenience*. A great taste for British cottons prevails all over these countries, and it most assuredly is of the last importance that nothing be omitted that may serve to facilitate the diffusion of this taste, and the means of gratifying it.

The climate is very trying to the European constitution, particularly during the months

* Fresh water is so dear and bad at Bushire, that ships cannot take any supply on board, whereas it may be had at Karak in the greatest abundance, and free of all charge.

of June, July, and August; and ophthalmia is frightfully prevalent. The natives of the town walk about with the disease upon them, and, except it rises to an aggravated pitch, they take no remedies; hence the number of blind at every corner of the town. It appears principally among the lower orders, and of them the women and children are most severely afflicted. There can be no doubt that the disease proceeds from the united influence of the excessive heat of the atmosphere, the great glare of the sun reflected from the desert, and the fine particles of dust blowing about in all directions, while during the night the atmosphere is damp from the copious deposits of dew, to the effect of which all the inhabitants are exposed for the greater part of the year, as they sleep on the tops of their houses without any curtains between them and the sky, and generally with the head entirely uncovered. Hitherto I had escaped, but a few days after our arrival here I became blind for sixteen days. The town had been visited by the cholera

and plague, and was now almost entirely depopulated.

Abdul Russool, the sheikh or governor, was of a cruel, crafty, and avaricious disposition, and his only aim was that of filling his treasury, no matter how. Instead of being respected, he was execrated on all hands. The ships trading to this port are compelled to load with his goods, and convey them to India at a lower rate than they can possibly afford, and when any of the stock he has laid by in his granaries is scarce and dear in the bazaar, he forces the merchants to purchase from him at *his* own price, which is never less than fifty per cent above what they may procure it elsewhere.

Justice is here a marketable commodity ; he who has the heaviest purse secures from the kazi the most favourable decision, and a rich man, although his hands may have been steeped in the blood of his own parent, can, by bribery, escape with impunity. The sheikh is, notwithstanding these little *foibles*, a shrewd and clever man, and a good *practical* magis-

trate. He often visits the coffee-houses **incognito**, and few robberies are ever committed without detection. He has a son about four-and-twenty years old, of whom he is **most** lavish in his abuse. "Look at that poor miserable animal," he would exclaim; "when my eyes are put out, that 'kulb *' will be sheikh."

The male inhabitants of Bushire did not possess the free and independent demeanour of the Nomadic Arabs, although they were decidedly superior to the cringing Hindoo. Of the women, I saw very little, they being under a strict *surveillance*, closely watched whenever they went abroad, and muffled up as usual. One or two young Armenian ladies, who called on Mrs. Mignan, were exceedingly pretty, though the *cestus* of Venus would not have spanned their waists; but the *ampleur des pudiques charmes* of the Armenian ladies is no fault with Orientals. The Armenians have a neat church

* Kulb-dog, a Persian epithet of abuse.

and burial-ground, and a school for the education of their children, instituted by that most eccentric character Wolff, the converted Jewish missionary.

The kaleoons we smoked at Bushire were superlatively fine; I thought them far superior to the celebrated "nargilahs" of Baghdad. Persian tobacco is, beyond all comparison, the best in the world, so mild, that the most delicate lady may imbibe it without experiencing the least unpleasant effect, whilst its flavour is most delicious.

Why it is not smoked instead of the poisonous trash which the "Ducks" use in their hookahs at Bombay, is to me an enigma, for its cost is trifling, a constant communication is kept up between the two ports, and the import duty not worth mentioning.

I have alluded to the impressive effect produced by the muezzins* calling the people to prayer, and proclaiming the time of wor-

* The priest is so called who, among the Turks and Persians, cries the hour of prayer from the top of the mosques or minarets.

ship from the mosque. The solemn, sonorous cry of “ Ullah Ukbar !” God is great, thundered over the house tops at the stillest hour of morn, gives one an idea of some superior being calling man to rouse himself from his lethargy, and to contemplate that period when

“ He and time must part for ever.”

It may be owing to the novelty of the scene, but I certainly thought this a more impressive mode of calling the attention of the multitude to “ *res sacræ*,” than our own custom of tolling bells.

During the period we remained here, the all-engrossing topic of conversation turned towards the coming of the Russians. The Armenians devoutly wished for the annexation of the whole country to Russia, as they would then be thought more of than they ever can be under a Mahomedan government. They well know that the Muscovites have supplanted us in the favour of the shah, and that they contemplate the occupation of every town

of Persia, and are determined by every means in their power to expel, not only our public officers, but every man bearing the name of an Englishman, from that country. Indeed, our influence is at present limited to Southern Persia only. When they do advance, it will, of course, be from the most innocent and *disinterested* motives—the emperor has so great a regard for these Asiatic Christians that he must give them his powerful protection. The sooner they come the better, as the promotion in the Bombay army generally, and in my regiment in particular, is wretchedly slow; and these *gallant* Russians will surely not allow all the Armenian damsels to embrace Islamism, or consign their pursy fathers to “cold obstruction,” and perpetual oblivion in the withering shade of Persian despotism!

But, in seriousness, we really should keep a sharp look out towards that quarter. Sir John Malcolm used to say, and with great truth, that the danger was from Russia establishing such an influence over Persia, as would enable her to use Asiatic states as aids

and instruments in the invasion of British India. He did not *then* mean to say the danger was proximate, but simply that we should never cease to contemplate it as possible, and, without incurring any unnecessary expense, should suit our means of defence to those of eventual attack.

CHAPTER VI.

Russian Ambition—The Russian Army—Army of India—Bengal Sepoys—The Persian Route to India—Policy of Persia—The Persian Army—Route to India—State of Khorezmia—Advance of the Russians—Probable Disasters—Koordish Allies—Route of the Oxus—Dismissed Sepoys—Passes and Defiles of Cashmere—Approach to our Indian Frontiers—Our Defensive Positions—The Indian Army.

HAVING in the first volume of this work cursorily alluded to the subject of an invasion of our Indian empire by Russia, I now shall submit to the reader some observations on that most interesting and vital topic, a portion of which, shortly after the termination of my overland journey, in the year 1830, I presented to the Earl of Clare, when his lordship was at the head of the government of the presidency to which I have the honour to belong. It is not so much my intention to discuss the probability of an invasion by Russia, connected as it is so intimately with the politics of

Europe, as to refer to the practicability of such an occurrence. If such an expedition is ever undertaken, we may be assured it will not be set on foot until that bold and wily government, which never sleeps, is prepared to execute whatever ambitious design it might contemplate ; we may therefore safely assume that, if the attempt be made, it will be with all necessary preparations and due provision of warlike *materiel*.

The first and most important point is, to know one's enemy. How many victories have been gained by the weaker power, solely from the presumption or ignorance of its more powerful opponent. Now, as our struggle would be for existence as well as empire, we ought to leave nothing to chance, but correctly calculate the means opposed to the threatened attack. Whether the sepoy of British India could stand against the Russian soldier, can only be decided by considering the physical powers of both. Of the latter I will now speak ; and the

comparison between him and the former, I shall leave to my brother officers of the native infantry regiments to draw.

To calculate the amount of the Russian *disposable* army is extremely difficult. If we were to give credence to the reports published upon the Continent under the direct authority of the cabinet of St. Petersburg, we should conclude that its strength was prodigious. A few years ago, nine hundred thousand men were quoted as being ready to take the field. But one simple fact will reduce the calculation in a marvellous degree. When Bonaparte advanced to the ancient capital of the Muscovites, with one hundred and thirty thousand men, he outnumbered all the forces which the emperor Alexander could bring against him. The Russian army did not certainly exceed ninety thousand men—there were, perhaps, fifty thousand men on the Turkish and Persian frontiers; and, assuredly, the maximum was not in excess of one hundred and fifty thousand fighting men. During the last

campaign against the Ottoman Porte, however, their exertions were more considerable: in the year 1829, many Russian officers *admitted* to me, that they had lost seventy thousand men, and, during the following year, nearly double that number fell. The grand army of the Balkan amounted to about forty-five thousand infantry and cavalry, which in less than a year was reduced to a moiety of that number. We may, therefore, safely estimate the whole force employed in this most unjust and aggressive war at two hundred and fifty-five thousand men: to which may be added the army of the Araxes, under Field Marshal Paskewitch Eriavski, amounting to about ten thousand more. They have thus a force of two hundred and sixty-five thousand men. Russia could not muster another soldier to send into the field. To effect even the present numerical force, the whole empire was so entirely denuded of troops, that, had the Polish insurrection *then* occurred, that ancient kingdom might *now* have been independent.

If France and England combined against Russia, how many Muscovite troops could be spared for such a distant field of operations as British India? But, let us see of what kind of stuff they are made. The passive and iron valour of the infantry, the rapid and skilful movements of its irregular cavalry, are terms of renown earned in many a bloody field. Frederick the Great said of them, what was repeated of us at Waterloo, "I may kill but cannot defeat them." When, at Austerlitz, the Duke of Dalmatia's able movements divided the forces of the czar, Sir Walter Scott says, "a division of the Russian guards made a desperate attempt to restore the communication—the French infantry were staggered; but while the Russians were in disorder from their success, Bessieres and the Imperial guard advanced—the encounter was desperate, and the Russians displayed the utmost valour before they, at length, gave way to the discipline and steadiness of French veterans. Their loss was twenty thousand men. Again, at Eylau, the French

had the advantage in numbers. Two strong columns advanced to turn the Russian right and storm their centre; they were driven back by the heavy fire of the Russian artillery. The Russian infantry stood like stone ramparts—they repulsed the enemy—their cavalry came to their support—pursued the retiring assailants, and took both standards and eagles.” Again, “a French regiment of cuirassiers had gained an interval in the Russian army, but were charged by the Kossacks, and only eighteen were saved.” After this tremendous battle, when the loss of the Russians was computed at twenty thousand, and that of the French at considerably more, the Russian general was entreated by his officers to renew the action next day, but, having exhausted his ammunition and provisions, he retreated.

Let us follow them up to Borodino. Both armies were about one hundred and twenty thousand strong. No action was ever more keenly contested, or at so murderous an expenditure of human life. The French carried

the redoubts, but the Russians rallied under the very line of their enemy's fire, and again advanced to the combat. Regiments of raw peasants, who till that day had never seen war, formed with the steadiness of veterans, and, uttering their national exclamation of "*Gospodee pomilominos!*" God have mercy upon us, rushed into the thickest of the battle, where the survivors, without feeling either fear or astonishment, closed their ranks over their comrades as they fell: while, supported alike by their enthusiasm and sense of predestination, life and death seemed alike indifferent to them. The Russians were ordered to retreat, but so little were they broken that, after the battle, they buried their slain comrades, and carried away their wounded at leisure.

This, then, is the enemy we may very shortly have to meet, either on the banks of the Indus, or nearer to the shores of the Persian Gulf. But, to assist our judgment still more, let us hear what several experienced British officers, who saw them more

recently at Adrianople, under very great disadvantages, say regarding them. “The strictest discipline prevailed amongst them. The infantry regiments were reduced from three thousand to seven hundred men, so great was the mortality: they made forced marches, carrying sixteen days’ bread, marching twelve hours a-day in a burning sun, (north latitude 41° to 43° , about the same as the Oxus); they afterwards suffered dreadfully from sickness—from five to seven hundred sick at once; the cavalry men were very sickly; the horses in good working condition; the appointments rough, but in perfect order. The mortality was frightful, owing to the disgraceful state of the commissariat and medical departments: so much were they in need of good surgeons, that many Russian officers consulted the pasha’s doctor, who was a notorious quack.”

Now, for the state of the commissariat: “there were loud complaints against the commissary-general, who was accused of selling the wholesome provisions received from Rus-

sia, and serving out inferior," (this I know to be a common practice). Again: "Previously to leaving Adrianople the soldiers had been repeatedly without food, and for a fortnight had not tasted wine or spirits, though these liquors were sold for a farthing a pint." The Russian rations are described by the Honourable Major Keppel, as being a small quantity of meat twice a week, biscuit of the worst description, and a little oatmeal. Sir James, then Captain, Alexander, says, black bread and salt, with a portion of spirits, daily. This intelligent officer draws the following comparison between the English and Russian soldier. "The evolutions are performed with precision, but not with the rapidity of English manœuvres. The cavalry move slowly compared with the impetuosity of British dragoons; but the Russian horse-artillery are inferior to none. The common soldiers are patient under fatigue and privation, and, from their submission to their superiors, they, without hesitation, follow wherever led, and unflinchingly will stand

exposed to the severest fire. Still, in physical strength and reckless gallantry, they are inferior to our troops." Sir James Alexander might likewise have added, that they are far inferior to us (and to the French also, of course) in military tactics. Of the Don Kossacks, Sir Walter Scott remarks, "As light cavalry they are unrivalled; they and their horses have marched one hundred miles in twenty-four hours without halting: with them in front, no Russian army can be liable to surprise; in charging, they spread out like a fan, uttering their 'hourra,' each man acting individually. Their devotion to their officers is quite proverbial, and forms a most valuable trait in the character of the Russian soldier; he looks up to his commanding officer as a second father."

From these extracts, therefore, it is pretty clear that the Russian soldier is a tough sort of *materiel*—of iron valour, patient of fatigue, capable of subsisting on the coarsest food, and enthusiastically devoted to his own officers. The light cavalry is unrivalled; the

light artillery is inferior to none; while the heavy cavalry is only not so alert as the British.—Here, therefore, is a military force which, if only supported by corresponding attention on the part of the government to the efficiency of its medical and commissariat departments, would be truly formidable. Be the state of information among the subordinate grade of its officers what it may, the general staff of the army has never been wanting in military skill, and many departments are, we know, particularly effective.

The defects above noticed would, of course, be of serious importance on such an extensive line of operations, should they still remain uncorrected. The nearer the army approached the Indus, the more irreparable would be its diminished efficiency from ill-regulated supplies: its energies would be cramped by the increase of, and necessary provision for, its ineffective men; few of whom would ever so far recover as to be reported fit for duty. From the unskil-

fulness of the medical department, whose practitioners are all quacks, the sickness that would exist in the force may be easily imagined. The countries through which it would march are chiefly pastoral, or producing grain far different to what the soldier has been accustomed ; his diet must, of necessity, be greatly changed : this and the effects of climate would sweep off thousands. Upon the whole, therefore, when we recollect the revolt on the accession of the present Czar at St. Petersburg, the consequences of a stagnation of trade in the Baltic and Black Seas, the troops required on the Swedish and Turkish frontiers, with those in the occupation of Poland, we may conclude that, without a single violation by *us* of Russian territory, few troops could be spared for aggression by *her*—far less the numerous and efficient army that so great an enterprise would imperatively demand.

I have shewn above, that the supply of two hundred and sixty-five thousand men for the war with Turkey comprised a total

muster of the disposable force. Now, with so many other defensive cares demanding her most serious attention, a few thousands of these only could be considered really available—and a few thousands on such a base of operations, we should laugh at.

The present strength of the army of India, including the Queen's and the Honourable East India Company's European troops, amounts to about two hundred thousand men. Of these, twenty thousand are British soldiers, drilled and disciplined in a first-rate style. Indeed, I may safely assert in this place, *en passant*, that the grand reviews in Hyde Park, although composed of picked corps and surrounded with so much "pomp and pageantry," are not better parades than we lately had at Poonah, under the immediate command of that highly distinguished cavalry officer, Major General Sleigh, C. B.

As of the above number the native troops form the great mass of the Indian army, let us hear what the late Sir John Malcolm says of them:—

“ The Bengal sepoys that were engaged in the attack of the French lines at Cuddalore behaved nobly,—it was one of the first times that European troops and the disciplined natives of India met at the bayonet. The high spirit and bodily vigour of the rajpoots of the provinces of Bahar and Benares (the class of which three-fourths of the army was then composed) proved fully equal to the contest. In a partial action which took place in a *sortie* made by the French, the latter were defeated with severe loss; and the memory of the event continues to be cherished with just pride both by officers and men of the Bengal native army. Had the result of this affair and the character of these sepoys been more generally known, some of our countrymen would have been freed from that excessive alarm which was entertained for the safety of our Eastern possessions. I trust that every event that can seriously disturb the peace of our Indian empire is at a great distance; but if an European army had crossed the Indus, I should not tremble

for its fate. I well know that the approach of such a force would strike no terror into the minds of the men of whom I am writing, and that acting with British troops, and led by British officers, they would advance with almost as assured a confidence of victory, against a line of well-disciplined Europeans, as against a rabble of their own untrained countrymen. They might fail, but they are too bold, and too conscious of their own courage and strength, ever to anticipate defeat."

Russia has the choice of two grand routes by which she can advance upon British India; the one is by Persia, the other by the Oxus or Amoo *, as it is called by the na-

* I am just informed that Lieutenant Wood, of the Indian navy, who is attached to Sir Alexander Burnes's important mission to Cabool, has discovered the source of this river, which rises amongst the mountains in Sirkool, at an elevation of fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea, from a lake which is encircled by mountains on every side except the western, through which it finds a channel. This lake has been named "Lake Victoria" by Sir Alexander Burnes and Lieutenant Wood.

tives. The region north of the Paropamisian ranges would be the best base of military operations ; but to enter into detail must far exceed the limits assigned to this chapter. I shall, therefore, take a general sketch only of the difficulties to be surmounted. The Persian route would, of course, be much influenced by the state of Persian feeling. Although the force which Persia *hostile* could bring into the field would be held in utter contempt, still the dangers of keeping open the communication, the annihilation of small detachments, and the difficulty of obtaining supplies, would be sufficient to render the success of any army passing through her provinces extremely doubtful. Our naval supremacy in the Black Sea would also tend to augment the number of difficulties in a superlative degree. With the Persian army officered by us after the manner of our extra battalions in India, and a few ships of war cruising in the Black Sea, the security of this base of Russian operations would be in too great a jeopardy for the most deluded

autocrat to hazard his army so far from the limits of his sway. The Persian province of Azerbijaun, which borders the southern frontiers of Russian Armenia, is by far the most productive one in Persia ; Mazanderaun and Astrabad, on the south-western shore of the Caspian (now a Russian lake), are also exuberant in their vegetation. Russia would endeavour to grasp at these provinces ; and, if successful, they would become the base of all future operations. Let us suppose that this was accomplished : indeed, it may be said that she has already seized the frontier province—also that the Russian *corps diplomatique* has advanced *pas à pas* some hundred miles towards India, and that the Russian army is close behind them. Let us now fancy a British force marching through the most favourable country. The Russian reserves concentrate their detached posts, and are left dependent on themselves : the Persians are their enemies ; the best “tooffunchees,” or irregulars, are inhabitants of these very provinces ; communication being

at all times kept up with difficulty, and without a single action even, between the opposing armies, we can easily imagine how great would be the despondency arising from the unknown nature of the dangers the enemy was advancing to meet, the certainty of destruction in case of failure, and the prospect of annihilation to all stragglers. Thus far the picture is not very pleasing. When, again, we remember that the Ukraine for cattle and grain, and the Crimea for camels, are among the chief sources on which the Russians could place any reliance, and the interception of the means of transporting such supplies by our men of war, we may be permitted to add this to the general account of distress and hardship under which the Russians would be suffering.

During their terrible march, the mortality amongst the cattle would be immense; for, if that mortality was sufficient to block up the roads with carcasses in the comparatively short march of the Russian army through Roumelia, in the year 1830, where the roads

were excellent and the forage plentiful, what might not be expected to occur when it reached the extensive wilds of Khorasan?

I shall here state a fact or two relative to Persia and its resources. For a very long period, our Indian governments continued deaf to all the entreaties for assistance of the late king and his son Abbas Mirza, which entreaties were accompanied by reiterated assurances, that if we longer withheld from them our support, their kingdom would fall into the hands of Russia. For many years, my lamented friend, Major Hart, was the only commissioned officer permitted to remain in the service of the Persians; and although several officers of the "local army" offered to relinquish their allowances for permission to join him, for the purpose of organising the Persian troops on the Persian frontiers, our Indian government would not accede to their requests. It was only quently to the demise of Major Hart, supreme government of India con-

grant the Persians a few officers; and when the order reached Bombay, none *above* the rank of subalterns were allowed to proceed to Persia, and even this grade was limited to two or three officers, who possessed the greatest interest at head-quarters. It was *then*, and not at the present crisis, that we should have lent Persia such support as would have rendered her independent of Russia, and, by the adoption of a determined line of policy in all our relations, have inspired *her* with that degree of confidence in *us* as would have prevented her falling into the snares her more wily friends prepared for her: notwithstanding, however, our sins of commission and omission, if the Persians will best consult their own real interests, they will yet cling to us; for, should they eventually join Russia, their kingdom is irretrievably lost.

I have mentioned that the only regular Persian army was organised by his royal highness prince Abbas Mirza, under the immediate command of Major Hart. The

present available forces of Persia amount to about fifty thousand men; all the other troops within the empire in excess of this number are "tooffunchees," who would rise only in case of the actual invasion of their own native districts, and are not to be depended on as a means of direct resistance to Russia. But the scarcity of supplies throughout the country itself is scarcely credible. Even the shah himself has often found it next to an impossibility to provide for the wants of his own party, when moving from one part of the empire to another; and such is the extreme difficulty of procuring forage, provisions, &c. that, when Colonel Sir John Macdonald Kinneir last journeyed (during the summer of 1826) from Bushire to the court of Teheraun, his Persian meh-maundar was obliged to send in advance to the several villages through which he intended to pass, to give intimation of the approach of the mission. Between *hostile* Persia and *acquiescent* Persia, these are among the principal difficulties to be antici-

pated. But, let us consider this latter hypothesis.

The Volga and the Caspian would be the line of communication between Russia and Astrabad. Here, no opposition could possibly be offered. From the position of Astrabad, it would form the grand dépôt and base from which all the operations of Russia must emanate. Hence to India the road would strike direct through the cities of Meshed and Herat (both of which are situated on the eastern side of the Persian empire) to Cabool. The distance between Astrabad and Meshed is about three hundred and fifty miles; thence to Herat, one hundred and ninety*; Herat to Cabool five hundred and ten; and Cabool to Attock one hundred and fifty: making a grand total of twelve hundred miles†. The daily march for a

* Kafilahs perform the distance from Meshed to Herat in a week or eight days, including a couple of halts on the road.

† I am inclined to believe that I have over calculated the above distances, and that when these countries are

camel is thirty miles under a weight of six hundred and forty pounds. Now, as nearly the whole army would be composed of infantry and heavy artillery, with various kinds of carriages, ploughing through a country where wheels have never yet rolled, I scarcely think the Russian force could proceed on an average as much as ten miles per diem. Hence, it appears that it would take one hundred and twenty days on its march, if even it met with no other than natural obstacles to arrest its progress. But there are many difficulties on this route also: the immense distance through a territory without roads, the scarcity of supplies, and the resistance of the natives. Mr. Fraser says, that the proportion of cattle to men when he travelled in Khorasaun, was one hundred and fifty mules to one hundred and

better known to us, they will be found in excess of the correct number of miles. Major Rennel and Sir John Macdonald Kinneir estimate the distance between Delhi and Astrabad at nineteen hundred miles. It cannot, however, be so great.

forty men. The Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone's proportion when on his important mission to Cabool, was six hundred camels and twelve elephants to a party of seven hundred and fifty individuals. To form an idea of the prodigious number of cattle that would be required, we must remember that *they* depended on the country for their ordinary supplies; a Russian force must depend on *itself*: therefore, a camel for every two men would be absolutely required, independently of the cattle for the transport of military stores. We all know that the distracted state of Khorasaun is such, that the tribes raise no more grain than is just sufficient for their own consumption. So long as grain is in the ground, the chiefs *profess* the greatest fealty to the shah, but no sooner is it stowed safely in their granaries, than they resume their independent tone, convinced that even should an army be sent against them, it would be starved into a retreat!

The district of Astrabad, in which the grand dépôt for the Russian army would be

situated, is described by Fraser (always critically accurate) as surprisingly rich; but the great quantity of rain that falls and stagnates in the impervious forests, during the summer months, renders that district peculiarly unhealthy. Indeed an epidemic prevails, not only in this part of Mazanderaun, but all along the western shore of the Caspian. Hence to Meshed the road lies along the Elbourz mountains. Although the country is here proverbially prolific, the eternal incursions of the Toorkomauns has rendered it a desert. To use Mr. Fraser's own words, when speaking of the apprehended advance of the Russian army into India, "the short, and easiest route for any such force, would be by ascending the pass leading to Bostaun, by which, after a march of three or four days through morasses and forests, and then ascending a steep defile, the country becomes open, and, except a few rocky defiles, the road to Herat would be found tolerably good: but much of the country would be entirely desert, and still more but

scantly inhabited. The remainder of the route to Cabool is of the same character with occasional fertile spots, but altogether incapable of supplying any considerable force with sufficient provisions." Mr. Iphinstone describes the hilly country at the foot of the Paropamisian chain as tolerably fertile, but to the south it sinks into the bare, sandy desert. However, on arriving at Cabool, provisions are cheap, and fruit abundant, horses for remount procurable, and forage plentiful. As the climate is most genial, and as all the rivers toward the Indus are fordable at the proper season, this city is the very position the Russians look to for reorganizing their forces previously to encountering the combined armies of India. Of the countries to be travelled over it is necessary to mention, that although sufficient grain is produced for the consumption of the inhabitants, any sudden or unusual demand could not possibly be supplied.

On these important contingencies, therefore, although Russian influence might provide for

them, it is pretty certain that, if even every intervening tribe were apparently friendly, this feeling would directly proceed from fear of the invading force, which if eventually unsuccessful would have but little mercy shewn to it. Whenever the trumpet sounded the retreat it would be no better than a confused rout, as every moment's delay would increase the number of enemies:—the utmost consternation would prevail—the retreating army would be dispersed and entirely dependent upon the country for its supplies, which if not voluntarily tendered would be taken by force—the countless hordes of central Asia would become desperate, and an indiscriminate massacre would ensue.

To provide against such a stroke of adverse fortune, it would be necessary to establish points of communication, and magazines; to effect this on an advanced line of twelve hundred miles would alone require no inconsiderable force, and however friendly the tribes might seem *at first*, the constant demands of these detachments on

their limited resources would sensibly diminish their zeal. Club law would be resorted to, and the “chabook” applied to all reluctant purveyors of supplies, which would at once rend asunder the feeble bonds that had attached them to the invaders, and produce revolt. That the invaders in their advance would be joined by various tribes is quite certain:—a Koord of rank and intelligence (Beder Khan) told Mr. Fraser that so discontented were the tribes, that if a thousand men of any European nation were to make their appearance, from whatever quarter, Russia, France or England, they would be joined by twenty thousand Koords. Now, I think, this would greatly embarrass them, for they must either look to the Russians for supplies, or subsist by plundering the whole line of country through which they passed, (this they would partially do at any rate), but either way I think their presence might tend only to increase the difficulties of the Russian commander-in-chief. The personal oppo-

sition from the inhabitants themselves, appears a trifle in the scale of considerations. The Afghans are so scattered that they would be incapable of offering any serviceable resistance.

On a review of the preceding remarks, it is evident that although the difficulties to be surmounted are excessive, yet under certain contingencies, even by this route, it is not an impossibility that a Russian army should reach the banks of the river Indus.

The second route by which the Russians could advance upon our Indian possessions, is that of the Oxus. The more closely we consider the state of anarchy and confusion in which all the tribes occupying the banks of that river now are, the more obvious must it appear that this line is the easiest of accomplishment, and, therefore, demands our especial notice. In fact, no obstacles whatever exist to prevent these countries being invaded, retained, and made a base for all future operations. A few armed steamers are only required on the river, and the

whole might be accomplished; and, we have practical proof before us of the ease with which these may be put together in the late important expedition to the Euphrates under that most indefatigable officer Colonel Chesney, of the royal artillery. The line of communication, certainly, extends for five hundred miles; but, what is this distance when the navigation of the Oxus is secured, and with it the absence of all danger of interception?

Moreover, on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, there happens to be two good bays—Balkan, and Mangushluck. The distance from the former to Khivah, which would be the point of embarkation on the Oxus, is about three hundred and fifty miles over a flat desert, in which there is a scarcity of water. General Mouravieff, a late Russian envoy, has actually *over-rated* the distance, and magnified the difficulties to a much greater extent than exists. This anomaly cannot easily be accounted for. However, Lieutenant-colonel Sir Alexander

Burnes admits the route to be sufficiently hazardous.

The distance from Mangushluck, is only two hundred and fifty miles, and although there may not be a plentiful supply of water, yet, caravans effect the passage, and the wandering Illyautts pasture their flocks and herds throughout the entire route. Mangushluck is the *passe par tout* which Russia is so anxious to secure, as it is not more than a few hours sail from Astrakhan—say fifty hours.

With such a noble river as the Volga, on which deeply laden vessels can be navigated from the very heart of the Russian empire, to the port of Mangushluck, there is absolutely nothing at all in the way to prevent the most perfect equipment of an invading army, especially as the Kalmuck Tartars in the neighbourhood, who are so entirely dependant on Russia, would most willingly supply all the requisite cattle.

The military force to be overcome on reaching Khivah, only amounts to fifty

thousand wretchedly armed men who are ~~an~~ mere rabble, so that its conquest would be simple enough; indeed, I have every reason to believe that the Russians maintain a tolerably good understanding with the Khivians, as they have fifteen thousand serfs there already, besides as many more at Bokhara; but even admitting their hostility, let us hear Mr. Fraser's opinion on the matter:—"There is little doubt that the Russians might with common management not only conquer, but retain possession of Khivah, and project and prepare for ulterior enterprises." According to the present line of Russian policy the attempt will be immediately made. Sir Alexander Burnes, whose authority is the very first we now possess on the subject, distinctly says, that the military force of Khivah, is quite insufficient to resist any determined effort of Russia. To sum up all, therefore, come when they please, the Russians, thus far, will have few other obstacles to encounter than the usual incon-

veniences attending the passage of a small desert.

Moreover, beyond Khivah, and along the banks of the river Amoo, there are no towns of any strength or consequence. General Mouravief says, that the passage for laden boats from Khivah to the neighbourhood of Bulkh is accomplished in about ten or twelve days. A few gun boats stationed at different points on the river, would secure the communication from Khivah to Koondooz. Sir Alexander Burnes says, "it is navigable from Oorgunge to near Koondooz ; its channel is straight, free from impediments ; bed firm and sandy ; is *never* fordable. In its floods it covers and fertilizes several miles on each bank ; its lowest breadth is four hundred yards ; about a month after its greatest rise the velocity was six thousand yards per hour. The river is occasionally frozen over annually above Koondooz, and below Khivah. The boats are flat bottomed, and built of a particular kind of wood which grows in abundance on the banks, and requires no

seasoning before use ; their burthen twenty tons, draught one foot when laden." But if both wood and supplies were scarce, what is there to prevent an exportation from Russia of every thing the force might require ? Thus far, there is absolutely nothing to diminish the efficiency of the soldier—Bokhara is proverbially healthy, and Budukshaun an earthly Elysium. On this line the Russians would have the field entirely to themselves, as we know little or nothing of these countries, nor their inhabitants, and should, therefore, be utterly incapable of offering any effectual resistance. Monsieur Jacquemont says, " Nothing in fact, is so practicable, as the march of a large European army with its *matériel* from Toplis to Delhi, and it would have the choice of three different roads by which it might debouch in three columns upon India."

Having briefly examined the ground which the Russians have long since surveyed for their own purposes, and over which they most probably would march on their way to

dia, I shall now probe the vulnerability of frontiers from this direction. Timour ered Hindoostaun from Toorkistaun in ee columns—the first was directed on oltaun; the second, by Bulkh, Cabool, Peshawaur to Attock; the third, by narcaud, towards Cashmere. It is not y long since a plan was handed to the reign of Russia for sending a force to hmere, *via* Bokhara. The projector cal-
ited on the Russians being joined by the entited from every part of India, and he ainly calculated correctly; for, doubtless, invading army may be certain of having usands of *our own* dismissed sepoys (all ly drilled) the moment it approaches our ian possessions. I am, really, afraid to quote number of dismissals *per annum*, from three armies of India; but since our late vernor-general Lord William Bentinck's toward" act—that of abolishing corporal ishment throughout the *native* army, the ber has been prodigious from the Bombay idency *alone*.

Colonel Evans says, there are several passes between Bulkh and Cabool, which run close along the sides of rivers, and there is likewise a defile from Koon-dooz to Cashmere. There is much snow throughout these passes in May, but by the middle of June all is clear, and the heat rather great. It cannot, however, (as I know from personal experience) be more oppressive than it is in Russia at the same period of the year. The defiles lead between perpendicular heights, varying from two to three thousand feet, and are so tortuous that they often form distinct inclosures like fortified positions. The valleys are all stored with grain and fruit. The Russians look to Cashmere from a knowledge that the moment they take it, they possess the key of the British Indian empire. Of this there cannot be a doubt. To effect it, they would, as a matter of course, seize Budukshaun, which is bounded in part by Kafferistaun, extending towards the north of Cashmere.

The description by Mr. Elphinstone of

this highly interesting country, is very similar to the present state of Koordistaun. The whole region is mountainous, and broken into small valleys of extreme fertility, which produce an abundance of fruit, and pasture numerous flocks and herds. The hills are covered with goats, and great attention is paid to the cultivation of wheat and millet. The roads, which are only fit for foot soldiers, are interrupted by mountain torrents, crossed by means of the trunks of trees tied together and slung over them by leathern ropes, removable at pleasure. The inhabitants are well armed with bows and poisoned arrows, swords and matchlocks, and the plan of attacking an enemy is precisely similar to that of the Koordish.

These being the passes leading to our frontiers, I shall now return to the neighbourhood of Kooloom, where, while one division of the Russian army would concentrate for the passage to Cabool, a second would descend to Peshawur, and a third to Cashmere.

To effect this, the natural obstacles, although great, would give way to the talent of experienced military commanders.

It may here be asked, what we have been about all this time. The answer is simple enough. We should have heard for the hundredth time that the Russians are approaching the Oxus, but we should have no certain information of the nature of their movements. We should depute officers not from their public services, but their *private* interest at head quarters* on special missions to the Cabool princes, for the purpose of soliciting them to form a coalition with us, and we should find them full of *le savoir faire*, and unmeaning professions, but not at all

* A friend of mine asked one of our Indian governors for an appointment. "Pray, Sir," said the governor, "what parliamentary interest do your relations in England possess?"—"None," replied the old officer. "Then I can do nothing for you," rejoined the great man. This equals the speech of a late commander-in-chief at Madras, who said to Colonel * * * *, "Don't talk to me of your services; I came here to advance my friends, and them *only* will I serve."

inclined to allow us to throw any troops into their territories. We should fritter away months in negotiation, and thus give them time to make defensive preparations. We should then, perhaps, reach the banks of the Indus with the combined armies of India, headed by officers of the Royal army, *of course*, who notwithstanding their great skill, might by some chance or other leave Cashmere to its own native ruler, and send a few regiments in observation on the Upper Indus. Meanwhile the Russian army disposed *en échelon* advances towards Attock—determined not to be drawn into any serious engagement, but demanding our closest attention. The Russian commander-in-chief hears of the arrival of a division of his grand army in Cashmere, which meets with little resistance, as the natives are no soldiers, and when we are dreaming of being suddenly attacked, he makes a *détour* to his left, on the pass to Cashmere. Our commander-in-chief observing this movement, orders every disposable corps to penetrate that country,

but finds the Russians have overreached him. All our defensive preparations on the left bank of the Indus become useless, and as we know not by which pass into Cashmere the Russian general enters, we are obliged to maintain an immense force at a ruinous expense, whilst the Muscovites are amusing us by their demonstrations *pour passer le tems*, and, "pendente lite," their spies and emissaries instigate every disaffected court in India to join in one simultaneous rise against us.

Without the delay of another day we should take possession of the fortress of all India, Cashmere: it is notorious that the Russians are, and have been for many years past, creeping cautiously along to attain their grand objects in the East, persuaded that the game is well worth the expenditure of some powder and shot; but we instead of checking their onward course of encroachment by a well-timed and spirited remonstrance, use a conciliatory and even *patronising* policy, and actually wait their convenience to throw off the mask. *Cui bono?*

To what good will all this tend? A quarrel must take place sooner or later, unless we anticipate it by measures which would render it unsafe for Russia to continue her advance. Although the British government so strongly suspects her, it will not confess its conviction how completely it is tricked by the insidious and *politique* cabinet of the Autocrat.

I repeat, that if our possessions in India are worth the holding, we should fling off our usual dilatoriness, and at once take post in Sind, the Paunjaub and Cashmere; and we should do well to benefit by the remark which the emperor Ukbar made—“From early antiquity,” said he, “Cabool and Candahar have been accounted the gates of Hindoostaun, one affording entrance from Turan, and the other from Iran, and if both places are properly guarded, the extensive empire of Hindoostaun is safe from the irruptions of foreigners.”

Our present frontier is radically bad, leaving as it does a strong and fertile country in the hands of untried friends, who

at this moment sustain a force that might become hostile to us when it would be rather *inconvenient*, to say the least of it. Sind would be a very desirable acquisition: it produces abundance of grain, and numerous flocks, herds, and camels. In referring to the already published accounts of the Punjab, we find that an army of eighty thousand men has been maintained at Lahore, from the neighbouring resources. The revenues of Cashmere at present exceed forty lacks of rupees—under us they would amount to a crore. Sir Alexander Burnes distinctly states, that an enemy, native or European, if defeated in the plains, might defy, in the valley of Cashmere, every attempt at subjugation; since it could subsist without foreign aid in a natural fortress that might be rendered impregnable. It is, therefore, quite clear that for the successful defence of the empire of India, we must negotiate with Runjeet Sing for the province of Cashmere and the fort of Attock. Possessing these places, the Russians in their

advance must confine themselves to an attempt at crossing the Indus. As a defensive position Attock seated on the high road to our frontiers, and being the usual ferry, might easily be held by us, though in its present state it is scarcely tenable. However, we might immediately establish quarters in its neighbourhood, where we could intrench ourselves and give the Russians some little amusement. We might also form a second cantonment near the branches of the Indus, at about five hundred miles from its *debouchure*, and a third at Hyderabad; these, with the main reserve northwest of Lahore, ready to advance at a moment's notice, would, as grand positions, be sufficient for the purpose.

At all events the Bombay army must soon advance towards the Indus, and secure the navigation of that noble river, for the conveyance of men and *matériel* to this frontier line, which must become the depot of *our* army; and we should also secure a facility of intercourse with the Bengal provinces, by

means of good roads, so that our generals may calculate on their movements with precision, and be enabled to detach their brigades, and concentrate them again according to circumstances. The construction of military roads would be grand and beneficial works for India; and as they are indispensable, and must eventually be made between all our large frontier stations, why should such procrastination take place in their formation? The whole military *matériel* throughout the army of India should be instantly assimilated, otherwise it would be useless "flagrante bello" to send stores from the arsenal in Bombay Castle up the Indus for the supply of the Bengal army.

I cannot enter further on the subject of our defensive positions, having no means of obtaining any positive and accurate knowledge of the superficies of those countries lying westward of our present positions. But I have endeavoured by an impartial consideration of the subject, to shew in as few words as possible, that it will be no easy

business for the Russians to bring to the banks of the Indus a force equal to the gigantic one we could concentrate there for the contest, (say ninety thousand picked troops, out of an army which even the Duke of Wellington has declared to be one of the finest he ever saw). We have little to fear *externally*, from any attempt at an invasion of the empire of India; retreat on either side would be certain destruction, nothing being realizable between the two alternatives:—of necessity a war with Russia on the frontiers of British India *must* be a war of mutual extermination!

CHAPTER VII.

Leave Bushire—Bahrain—Pearl-Banks of Bahrain—Abdul Wahab—The Cassinees—Rahmah bin Jaubir—Rahmah's Tragical End—His Family—Uttobeer Tribes—Arab Pearl-Fishers—Bahrain Pearls—Superstition—Fresh Water from the Salt Sea—Bahrain Horses.

WE were detained at Bushire for nearly five weeks, before any opportunity offered for quitting the gulf; when by the kindness of Captain Wyndham of the Indian navy, we were most handsomely accommodated with a passage on board the "Amherst," a fine eighteen gun sloop of war. Towards the middle of September we embarked for sea, and on the following morning at day-light, there being a light breeze from off the land, weighed, and stood across the Gulf to Bahrain, with dispatches from Colonel Wilson, the political resident, for the sheikh of that place. The island is situated on the Arabian

side of the Persian Sea*, and has had so many masters, that it is rather odd our own government have never taken possession of it.

Bahrain fell with Ormus (anciently Hamozia) under the dominion of the Portuguese upwards of three hundred years ago. Those conquerors lost it to Shah Abbas, who was aided in his undertaking by a British squadron. A prince of Oman next possessed this island, and in his turn was ejected. Shah Tamasp restored it to Persia, but his death put an end to all his designs, and afforded an ambitious and enterprising Arabian a fair opportunity of gaining possession of the island, where his successors still maintain their authority.

* Arrian says, "Bahrain is a day and a night's sail from the mouth of the Euphrates, and is called Tylos." He adds, "it is very large and spacious, and not mountainous, but produces plenty of several sorts of fruits, pleasant and agreeable to the taste." (Rooke's Arrian, 8vo. London, 1814; Vol. ii. B. vii. c. 20, pp. 166, 167.)

Bahrain, so famous for its groves of palm and pearl-fisheries, even at the time when pearls were found on the banks of Ormus, Kishm, Karak, and many other islands in "Oman's dark-blue sea," has now become of great consequence, as *those* banks are exhausted, whilst the banks of Bahrain have suffered no sensible diminution. The fishing season commences in April or May, and terminates in October. The bank extends along the Arabian coast for about one hundred and fifty miles, and it is well known that wherever there is a shoal, the pearl oyster is sure to be found.

Until within the last few years, much interruption has been experienced by the divers, in consequence of the incursions of the "Cassimees," or "Joassimees," who are the maritime portion of a powerful sect of heretics that wrested Mecca from the sway of the "vicar of the prophet of God*."

* One of the titles of Sooltaun Mahmoud, as heir to the Kaliphate, and the successor of Mahammed.

Their founder was Abdul Wahab (the slave of the Most High), the son of Soolimaun, who was born in the Arabian province of Nejdjud. He conceived that the doctrines of the Korân had lost much of their purity by time and the interpretations of the ignorant; he accordingly asserted himself a divinely commissioned reformer of existing abuses. Driven from the city of Bassorah, and its neighbouring dependency of Zobair, where he had located himself, he returned to the desert, and, not satisfied with spiritual weapons alone, used those of the secular arm for the propagation of his new opinions. His son Mahommed followed his footsteps; his grandson Abdulazeez did the same, and most effectually contributed to that purpose. His conquests alarmed even the Ottoman Porte, and although several powerful armies were despatched against him, he could not be subdued. The pilgrimage to Mecca was interrupted; that holy city as well as Medina fell into his hands, and the attempts of Selim the Third, and of Mustapha

the Fourth, to restore the unity of Faith, and to crush an audacious rebel, were quite as futile as had been those of Abdul Hamid; but after the peace of Bucharest, the present Sooltaun turned his whole attention to these objects, and successfully attained them.

These Cassimees, or Joassimees, had always regarded the orders of the chief of this new sect as sacred: even British commerce was at their mercy, and their atrocities fully equalled those of the Algerine corsairs. They were further encouraged by finding that for several years no British squadron had been sent against them, which they had fully expected after their repeated refusals to accede to our treaties. In the year 1809, however, the Bombay government determined to suppress their piracies. An expedition of land and sea forces was sent to their stronghold under General, then Lieutenant-colonel, Lionel Smith, and Admiral Rowley, when they were partially put down. Three years after this, they reappeared to the number of at least eighty

boats, some carrying as many as three hundred armed men. They visited Kishm, Linga, Assaloo, and various other ports, taking them by force, and following up their conquests by rapine and murder.

The most successful and most generally tolerated pirate that, perhaps, ever infested any sea, was an Arab chieftain, by name Rahmah bin Jaubir. This butcher-chief escaped the vengeance of our expedition, for he was too knowing a fellow to insult the British flag ; and it was the policy of our own government to give no offence to the Wahabee power whom he served. Rahmah, like Ancient Pistol, exclaimed, “ the world’s mine oyster, which I with sword will open.” He pirated for himself, and pocketed his booty. His thousand followers also squabbled for the loaves and fishes ; and as the greater number of these were his own bought slaves, and the rest, equally subject to his power and caprice, he was often as prodigal of their lives as of those of his enemies, who, even after submission, we

inhumanly tortured—some by impalement; and others by being disembowelled. He once shut up a number of his own crew in a wooden tank in which he kept their fresh water, and threw them all overboard.

I was present at the last interview this bucanier had with the English. It was at Bushire, in the British residency, in the presence of that accomplished officer, General Sir Ephraim Stannus, who was then holding the high office of political resident in the Gulf of Persia. Rahmah's appearance was most ferocious. His shirt had not been changed from the time it was first put on; no trowsers covered his spindle shanks; a spacious woollen cloak, or *abbah*, encircled his shrivelled figure; and an old ragged *kefiyah*, or head-kerchief, with green and yellow stripes, was thrown over his head. His dry, sapless body was riddled with wounds, and his wizened face most fearfully distorted by sabre gashes and by the loss of an eye. His hands were long and narrow, like the claws of a bird of prey, and his left

arm had been shattered by cannister shot. The bone between the elbow and the shoulder being completely crushed in pieces, the fragments had worked themselves out, exhibiting the arm and elbow adhering to the shoulder by flesh and tendons alone. Notwithstanding this, he valued it from its useful properties ; " For," said he, stretching out his long, ghastly finger, adorned with the only ornament he wore—a huge, silver-mounted seal-ring, engraved with Arabic characters, " I wish nothing better than the cutting off with my yambeeah *, as many heads as I can sever at one blow with my boneless arm."

This brutal corsair put to sea on a cruising expedition, accompanied by a fleet of Joassimee boats, which had also escaped the notice of our expedition. A desperate action was fought between Rahmah's fleet and the Uttobee Arabs of Bahrain, in which the

* A sharp poniard, or dagger, on whose blade is often engraven Arabic words, and sometimes very singular cabalistical inscriptions that cannot easily be deciphered.

former were signally victorious. Among numerous captures were two *baghalahs* bound to India, having on board several valuable Arabian horses for the *Bombay* government, on account of the stud-establishment of that presidency. These, he most carefully transhipped, and had them safely landed at *Bombay*. Subsequently, he cruised off *Bahrain* for the purpose of intercepting other *Joassimee* boats, which frequented that island for pearls, rice, and dates. In his action with them, he sank three, after taking out their cargoes; four he blew up for want of hands to man them; and the same number he brought into *Bushire* roads for sale. Having effected his object, he stood away to the southward, and continued cruising between the piratical port of *Ras-ul-Khymah* and the pearl-banks off *Bahrain*, pursuing his course of fearless, lawless rapine. No corner of this gulf was secure from his ravages: he swept from shore to shore, and passed from isle to isle with the force of the thunderbolt, and with the

speed of the lightning. He even threatened to attack both Bushire and Bassorah. A late British resident actually made preparations for the removal of his family to Shirauz, and Bushire itself was placed in a most efficient state of defence.

But here the corsair's career was destined to close. One fine morning, when the gray mists evaporated and left a clear line of horizon, it was suddenly broken by a little speck on the dark blue sea. Rahmah ordered the helmsman to bear up, and, the breeze freshening, soon came down on a heavy baghalah, and instantly stood stem on her, laid alongside, and prepared to board her on the gangway. When his intentions were questioned, the only reply he would give, or that could be distinguished by his antagonist, was, "What is that to you?" On rashly attempting to board, Rahmah's men were met on all quarters, and became completely overpowered by a superior numerical force. Hastily demanding of his crew, whether they would not perish by the annihilation

of their foes, and being answered by their war-cry in defiance, he rushed below, attached a match to his powder-barrel, returned on deck, and sprang upon the poop with his only son in his arms. The match ignited, and the vessels still firmly grappling, burst together into a thousand atoms, and were hurled through the air in the midst of a volcano of smoke and flames.—

“ And first one universal shriek there rush'd
Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash
Of echoing thunder; and then all was hush'd
Save the wild wind, and the remorseless dash
Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,
Accompanied with a convulsive splash,
A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.”

When the frightful explosion had subsided, nothing was seen but a black cloud on the ocean, enveloping all around like a pall, and darkening the very sky. A few bubbles, and the trembling ripple of the sea were the only distinguishable trace of the combatants!

Thus terminated the career of a corsair who

had infested the Gulf of Persia for many years. He had even excited the attention of the Indian government in as great a degree as that of the Persian, whose efforts were too feeble to put down his squadron. His character and conduct were stained with the usual vices of his order. By exhibiting the ferocity of a robber, and the baseness of a traitor, he obtained all his power ; and his unquenchable thirst for plunder effected his annihilation.

Rahmah bin Jaubir was the only surviving son of Jaubir bin Athbi, of the Arabian family of Yalahimah. His eldest brother, Abdallah, was barbarously murdered by a prince of Shirauz whilst residing under that Persian's protection. Shabaun died a natural death on his return from a pilgrimage to Mecca's holy shrine: and Mahomed was killed at Khore-Hassan in the defence of Shabaun's harem.

The family is a scion of the ancient stock of Uttobee conquerors of Bahrain, who originally came from Arabia, and intermar-

ried with three powerful tribes, of which the Beni Yalahimah is one. These three tribes united for mutual security, and for the purpose of resisting other powers. They became pastoral and nomadic, with the express understanding that the profits arising from their conjunctive occupations should be equally divided amongst the whole. Their governor was to be selected from the eldest tribe ; the second (Yalahimah) was to furnish seamen ; and the youngest to carry on the business of a commercial agency. This union worked well for nearly half a century, when the individuals forming the mercantile branch of the concern became anxious to trade on their own responsibility. With this determination, they artfully induced the others to allow them to send an accredited agent to the Bahrain pearl-banks, and, as their chief business lay in that quarter, to endeavour to purchase a share of the fishery, rather than to continue a system of barter for its produce.

The Yalahimah tribe readily granted a pas-

sage to their brethren free of all cost; and succeeded in their object beyond their most sanguine expectations. In due course of time the partnership was dissolved, and a peremptory refusal of a division of the acquired profits insisted on. A rupture ensued: each family commenced a harassing system of retaliation upon the other, until they openly avowed their determination to carry on hostilities both by sea and land. The Yalahimah being the weakest, were the greatest sufferers, and were nearly annihilated. The youngest were likewise much impoverished. The sheikh of Bahrain, jealous of the power and the prosperity of the eldest, who had located themselves near Zabarab, collected his forces, and unprovokedly attacked them; but, in the end, sustained a most signal defeat. Consequent upon this victory, the eldest tribe, elated by their successes, collected their boats, and suggested to their brethren the propriety of a general union. This they soon accomplished, and, proceeding to Bahrain, met with

such ineffectual resistance as to obtain possession of that valuable island without sustaining any great loss. They immediately began to open a trade for themselves, apportioned to one another grants of land, and even settled the exclusive rights of tenure: but the Yalahimah claimed a vote at the council board, which was indignantly refused.

They now immediately embarked, and left the island, cursing the deep injustice of such treatment; they determined, however, to make reprisals, and return blow for blow, come when or whence it might. From that very hour, they commenced the occupation of corsairs, which has been terminated only by the tragical end of Rahmah bin Jaubir.

To return from this digression to the valuable pearl-fisheries of Bahrain, it is to be remarked, that the Arabs, who are alone its fishers, pass the whole of their lives upon the bank. Their wives and children live on the island in cabins formed by the branches of the date, interwoven with reed. The population

is very limited. Their appearance and manners are precisely similar to all the maritime Arabs of the Arabian shore, with the exception of their stature, which is invariably tall and slender. They suffer from cutaneous diseases, and from inflammation of the eyes, which in its effects becomes as painfully distressing as the Egyptian ophthalmia. They never attain any great age, notwithstanding their habitual abstemiousness; and although they cultivate the beard, it is by nature weak, scanty, and soon turns gray. They wear no other covering than a cotton kerchief, girt around the loins by a number of small leathern thongs of the thickness of whipcord, made of buffalo hide, and of so lasting a nature as to endure the whole period of their lives. Their heads have no other shelter than that of an immense bush of hair anointed with fetid grease.

Their mode of diving to obtain the pearl oyster, is deserving of some notice. Having stripped, they seize hold of a

rope which is made fast to an outrigger projecting from the gunwale of the boat, and, with a basket slung around the neck by a thin cord, dive to the bottom, when they cast adrift the rope. Their descent is to a depth of forty feet, and they remain below the water for about a minute, during which time they collect nearly a dozen oysters, which they place into their basket and then ascend to the surface.

The pearls taken here are of two distinct kinds—white and yellow. The white are sent to Turkey and Europe, where they are more highly valued than even those from the Manar fishery off Ceylon, for these greatly deteriorate with age; the yellow, resembling the Japan pearl, are large and globular, and preserve their golden hue even after their rival has lost much of his lustrous appearance.

With regard to these pearls, Niebuhr says, that the irregularly shaped are taken to Constantinople and other parts of Turkey, where they are set in gold ornaments, or worked on rich velvets for the

ladies, whilst the perfect pearls are reserved for the Surat merchants, (in those days the wealthiest of the East), who send them throughout every part of India. He adds: —“ The women have so strong a passion for this luxury, and the sale of the article is so much increased by superstition, that there is not the least reason to apprehend any diminution either in the price, or the demand. There are none of the Gentiles who do not make a point of religion to bore at least one pearl at the time of their marriage. Whatever may be the mysterious meaning of this custom among a people whose morality and politics are couched in allegories, or where allegory becomes religion, this emblem of virgin modesty, has proved advantageous to the pearl trade.”

Tavernier, in his Travels, thus notices Bahrain:—“ There is a pearl-fishery round the Island of Bahrain, which belongs to the shah of Persia, and there is a good fortress garrisoned with three hundred men. The water they use in this island, and also

on the Persian coast, is salt, and of a bad taste; and it is only the natives of the country that can drink it. With respect to strangers, it costs them a considerable sum to get it good, for they have to draw it from the sea, at a distance of from half a league to two leagues beyond the island. Those that go to fetch it are commonly five or six in a bark, from which one or two of them dive to the bottom of the sea, having a bottle or two hung at their girdle, which they fill with water, and then cork them tight; for, at about two or three feet from the bottom of the sea, the water is sweet, and of the very best quality. When those who are let down have filled their bottles, they pull a small cord, which has one end fastened to some person in the boat, and it serves as a signal for their comrades to draw them up."

These remarks on the subject of drawing fresh water from the salt sea, are quite correct. It is a fact, that fresh-water springs are met with on this bank, at a depth of at least

eighteen feet. The water is soft and sweet. I believe the same phenomenon is known to exist in the Bay of Xagua, at the mouth of the Rio de los Lagertos, off Yucatan, and also in the Gulf of Spezzia. It has been thought that these springs, rising at the bed of the ocean, as well as a heavy fall of rain, are favourable to the formation of the pearl. Be this as it may, the fishermen always calculate on a good season when they have had wet weather: indeed, the merchants pay them higher when there has been much rain.

The town of Bahrain is walled and flanked by a few towers, after the Arabian style of building, and seated near to the shore. A small suburb surrounds it, inhabited by the poorer classes, and the bank divers, who, by their fishing exertions, produce an annual amount of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling. At one period, the island contained upwards of three hundred villages, but at present a few small hamlets only are to be met with, scattered about the most fertile spots, be-

neath shady date groves, and beside clear rills, and enjoying the advantage of a cool and not an unhealthy atmosphere. A Bahrain horse is proverbial for being as gentle as a pet lamb, but, when roused, is as fierce and as dreadful as the lion of the desert. The Arabs say, " Give us the Nejdjdee for size, the Montifikh for symmetry, but the Bahrain for *gentility*."

CHAPTER VIII.

Bahrain—Coast of Arabia—Narrow Escape—Storming Ras-ul-Khymah—Cape Mussendom—Pirates—Expedition at the Corsairs—Attack of Ras-ul-Khymah—Fall of the—Young Prisoners—Their Statement—Bassadore—Off in India.

séjour at Bahrain was limited to two days, when we weighed and crept ; the Arabian shore, with just enough fair breeze to lull the sails to sleep. successively passed on our lee-beam habee, the residence of Tanoun, a and enlightened Arab, and chief of Beni-Yas tribe ; then Shargah, belonging to a Joassimee, by name Sooltaun-bin- ; and finally visited Ras-ul-Khymah, appeared to me the most eligible place ; this whole line of coast for the site of a ; and from the earliest times it appears

to have been the resort and stronghold of all the corsairs who lurked about the Persian Gulf.

When the expedition of 1809 was fitted out from Bombay to destroy Ras-ul-Khymah, the Sooltaun of Muskat was expected to co-operate with it, but this he declined, alleging the impossibility of any large vessel approaching sufficiently near to bombard the town, owing to the shallowness of the coast, and it being a most dangerous lee-shore in a north-west wind, which blows for two-thirds of the year, and towards the winter, heavy gales from the south-east come on without any further warning than a thick fog, which precedes the wind only a few minutes.

That his highness the Imaum was perfectly well acquainted with this dangerous coast, cannot for a moment be questioned, since his ships were always navigating this gulf; and in confirmation of this opinion, I remember hearing the commander of one of

the East India Company's surveying ships, relate the narrow escape he experienced from shipwreck during his survey of this particular line of coast. He had anchored within a very short distance of the shore, in order to obtain observations of Jupiter's satellites—the wind and swell set in towards midnight, which caused the ship to drive so much, that it was as dangerous to make sail as to ride out the gale at anchor. Wishing to try the latter course, they sent down the top-sail yards, in the hope of being able to hold on for the rest of the night, but in a few hours they parted three cables, and on setting sail, the ship cast the wrong way, and lost considerably in wearing. The jib and spanker were blown from their bolt-ropes, and the vessel, under her courses and fore-topmast stay-sail, bowed before her canvass like a reed bending to a gale, and plunged through the foaming surf, which seemed like clouds driving in the heavens. If, after the quarter-master had called "by the mark five," the water had shoaled as the

ship careened with the wave, she must have struck: indeed, the commander hesitated whether he should not beach her at once, but she gradually edged off the shore, and eventually cleared the coast without having an anchor or cable left on board.

In addition to such dangers as the above, the sooltaun declared that the strength of the place, and the determined character of the garrison for obstinacy and bravery, precluded all chance of success, without the presence of an army of at least ten thousand men. Nevertheless, on the 13th of November, 1809, the British stormed the town—spiked all the guns—burned every boat in the harbour—levelled the fortifications—and lost *one* man.

In the course of a very short time, however, the fortifications were rebuilt, and Ras-ul-Khynah resumed its strong condition together with its formidable name. Repeated piracies were committed on the vessels trading between India and Persia, and these acts increased to such an extent, that it was

almost impracticable for any ship to proceed in safety past the Quoins*, or Cape Mussendom†, without convoy. Commerce had been materially injured—was, indeed, nearly abandoned.

The following fact will shew the audacity of these pirates. One of the East

* Some high and rugged rocks at the entrance of the gulf, so called from their supposed resemblance to a gunner's quoin. There is an open passage between them and the Arabian shore for vessels of five or six hundred tons burden.

† Cape Mussendom, or Musseldom, the Maketa of Nearchus, juts out a considerable distance. The extreme point of the cape is a massy abutment of barren rock rising from the sea, and severed from the main land apparently by some convulsion of nature. Sir Ephraim Stannus, when political resident in the Gulf of Persia, passed between it and the shore in the Honourable Company's sloop of war "Clive," then commanded by as good a sailor as ever trod a deck—the late Captain Beetham. No vessel had ever sailed through this channel before, nor has any one attempted the passage since. The strait is a most hazardous one, and can only be accomplished with a fair wind, as it is not above four hundred yards wide, and no bottom can anywhere be found. Off this cape (within less than half a mile of it) a British man of war anchored in a hundred fathoms

India Company's cruisers, stationed in the Persian Gulf for the protection of trading vessels, fell in with a country trader, the captain of which begged that his vessel might be convoyed by the cruiser towards Bushire. The solicitation was readily granted. The stranger contrived somehow or other to run close alongside the cruiser and threw so many armed men on board her deck, that she was soon carried. The bucaniers murdered many of the crew, and mutilated those whose lives they chose to spare. Shortly after this, a vessel hove in sight, which proved to be another British

water in a calm, to prevent being driven on the rocks. Moore thus alludes to this cape in his poem of the Fire Worshippers:—

“ Fresh smell the shores of Araby,
While breezes from the Indian sea
Blow round Selama’s sainted cape,
And curl the shining flood beneath,—”

The Orientals call this headland “Salamah.” Moore says, “The Indians when they pass the promontory throw cocoa nuts, fruits, or flowers into the sea to secure a propitious voyage.”

cruiser, whereupon the pirates abandoned both vessels, and, taking to their small boats, escaped.

The private merchant-ship "Minerva" was also taken, and, with the exception of three individuals, the officers and crew were brutally massacred. Of the three persons spared, one was an Armenian lady, the wife of the political resident in Turkish Arabia, who was held in the most afflicting captivity at or near Ras-ul-Khymah for many months, but a rich ransom was at length paid for her liberty.

It is not at all surprising that such audacious acts were perpetrated by the Joassimees, when the following indisputable fact, the result of consummate ignorance and imbecility, is made known. The Honourable East India Company's cruiser "Fury," commanded by the brave Lieutenant Gowan, was bearing despatches of importance from Bassorah to Bombay, which had been wrought by Tartars from Constantinople into Turkish Arabia. In running down the

gulf, Gowan was attacked by a Joassi fleet of boats, which he fired at right left, until they sheered off, having tained a heavy loss. On Lieutenant G an's arrival at the presidency, he called u the governor with his despatches, and course, officially reported the affair ; but, w was his astonishment to find, that instead being complimented in squadron or gen orders for his spirited resistance, and preserving the despatches, he received most severe reprimand, for daring to mo the innocent and unoffending Arabs of Persian Gulf!

The Bombay government, however, s sequently grew wiser, and were de mined to destroy these corsairs, and tl fortresses: to carry this into effect, a ft of about five thousand men, consisting the forty-seventh and sixty-fifth regime of the line, one Bombay native infantry co and the flank companies of others, with s artillery and engineers, were placed ur the command of Lieutenant-general Sir V

liam Grant Keir, of his late Majesty's service, and sailed from Bombay harbour towards the close of the year 1819. The naval part of this expedition consisted of his Majesty's ship "Liverpool," of fifty guns, "Eden," of twenty-six guns, "Curlew," of eighteen guns, and several of the East India Company's vessels of war and transports, with gun and mortar boats. Commodore Collier, R. N. commanded the squadron.

On the 2nd of December, the expedition reached Ras-ul-Khymah, and before daylight of the 4th, the first detachment of the troops landed a little to the southward of the town. Several gun-boats, and a pinnace with a twelve-pound carronade, covered the disembarkation. The tents were pitched on the shore, and the rest of the force was disembarked during the day. Whilst the men were thus employed, a body of Arabs advanced, and some slight skirmishing ensued between the antagonists. Shortly afterwards, two chieftains, well mounted, rode leisurely down the lines, within a very short

distance of the encampment, and reconnoitred our proceedings with the greatest *sang-froid* imaginable. They were fired at from the boats, when they dashed through the very centre of the camp. Although at least fifty muskets were discharged at them, they kept their course untouched. "Well done, my hearties!" shouted the men, who were quite delighted at their daring. The extremity of the camp was soon passed, and in a few more seconds, both suddenly checked their steeds, wheeled round with an air of utter defiance, stood gazing back upon us for a few minutes, and then trotted coolly away.

Ras-ul-Khymah is of considerable extent; and from the sea appears a place of great natural strength. The fort was always kept in good repair, with high walls, composed of mud and stone, and flanked by heavy ramparts. It stood upon a sandy peninsula, the isthmus of which was defended by a well-flanked battery, whilst the line towards "Oman's dark blue sea," was fortified, for the space of a mile, by batteries, each mounting

a single gun ranged at regular intervals. The houses were flat-roofed, and of stone, and, although exhibiting a mean appearance, their arrangement suggested the mode of life pursued by their inhabitants, and the necessity of being prepared for any surprise. A suburb of bamboo huts adjoined the town, immediately behind which lay a capacious basin, perfectly sheltered, and completely land-locked by a bar of sand which stretched across its mouth. Large vessels must discharge their cargo previously to crossing this bar. The batteries of the town bore distinctly on the entrance of the port; the harbour was full of shipping; the main land on the opposite coast appeared highly picturesque, and the mountains of Arabia reared their rugged and hazy outlines to the sky, forming a magnificent background to the whole scene.

On the morning of the 4th, two thousand of Syyud Saiad's troops joined the British force from Muskat over land. The "Curlew" weighed, and, standing towards the

beach, opened her fire upon the town. Some skirmishing also took place on the shore. The light company of the sixty-fifth regiment advanced and reconnoitred. The first line of trenches was made by means of sand-bags, and an advanced battery opened on the place, at the distance of three hundred yards. The Joassimee battery, which enfiladed the trenches, did considerable execution. Poor Major Molesworth, of the forty-seventh regiment, mounted the parapet of the trench to reconnoitre more minutely, and to ascertain how the formidable batteries could be best silenced. "They are loading now," he called out—"now they are running out their guns—look out for yourselves, my lads!" The next moment laid him in the trench—his head was blown to atoms! At length, a gun which had done murderous havoc amongst the men was completely silenced.

The following day, the "Liverpool" and "Eden" opened a tremendous fire right on the town. Shells were thrown with im-

mense effect. A Joassimee spy was brought into camp ; and declared that the Arabs had lost upwards of a hundred men. When our guns were discharged, the Arabs leaped out of the embrasures, and, picking up the round shot, immediately returned it, though the salutation was wide of the mark.

During the night of the 4th, the sentry of one of the pickets observed a dark object like a bear creeping on all fours, followed by several similar figures. He was cut down in a twinkling, together with all his comrades. All was confusion. The trenches were filled with Joassimees engaged with our men, who were most cruelly speared and sabred. They actually captured a howitzer, which was, however, almost immediately retaken by a party of the sixty-fifth, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Warren. A desperate action ensued : the Arabs fought with the utmost bravery, but were soon bayoneted. Heaps upon heaps were found in the trenches, in a state of nudity, and anointed with grease.

On the 7th, flags of truce were dispatched from the town, to which no attention was paid. The cannonading continued; and, on orders being issued to prepare for the storm, Colonel Elrington and the forty-seventh, with the flank companies of the Bombay native infantry corps, immediately marched forward. On a given signal, they rushed from the trenches and advanced to the breach, which was soon mounted, and the town entered. The enemy fled from the walls, and were seen scampering off towards the distant hills.

Two youths, together with four unfortunate old women, were the only living animals found within the town, whom the Arabs did not consider worth taking away with them. The blood-red flag gave place to the union—the fort was dismantled, and the walls razed. Our loss in killed was one major, and four rank and file. A lieutenant of the royal navy, a captain, sub-altern, two serjeants, a drummer, and forty-six rank and file, were wounded. The

enemy lost at least one thousand men—the number of the wounded was never accurately ascertained.

The two young prisoners turned out to be natives of the Coromandel coast, and the sole survivors of the crew of the schooner "Mary," of Madras, recently taken by the Joassimee pirates. They related that on the capture of their vessel, the captain and crew were put to death. The Joassimees made Mahometans of them, and took them into the interior. When the expedition hove off the coast, they were told to return to Ras-ul-Khymah, which they did, and on their way, were plundered of their clothes by the Muskat troops, and assured that the English would provide them with others. They said, there were upwards of two thousand men under arms, when our troops landed; and that, on our taking the place, the sheikh retreated to the desert, carrying his son along with him. The sheikh's brother, Mahomed Salim, was killed, together with two hundred men, and about twenty women, by the

shot from the "Liverpool," "Aurora," "Nautilus" alone, and hundreds died from their wounds. The Joassimees had an encampment about three miles from the shore, and about one month's vision with them. They alternately kept watch, and had good telescopes. Many of the runaways wanted to throw themselves on our mercy, but the Sheik Hassan-Ali dissuaded them, and told them that the British laid hands on them they would impale them all. These youths also said that during the siege, the women remained under stockades, which were erected for the purpose, as they were driven from their houses by the shot from the frigate and cruisers. Several shells burst, doing great execution; the pirates picked up all the pieces and threw them into the sea. They procured their powder and supplies from Muskat and Linga, the people of the latter place visiting the former for the express purpose of purchasing rice, which they sold for five dollars the bag. With the

pirates plunder is made a general stock, and distributed by the chief in equal portions ; water is scarce, and sold at the rate of a penny for a measure containing about two gallons.

The minor forts, such as Luft, Raumps, Zeilah*, &c., were also destroyed, and a military detachment from the expedition stationed on the southern extremity of the island of Kishm, which, however, was soon obliged to remove to Bassadore, on its western side, in consequence of the insalubrity of the first position.

Bassadore is now the naval station in this quarter, and the residence appointed by the Bombay government of the commodore commanding the gulf squadron, who hoists his flag on board the guard-ship. This island belongs to Syyud Saiad, the Sooltaun of Muskat, and

* Lieutenant Matheson, of the sixty-fifth regiment, was here killed. The siege lasted for five days, and, had it not been for the "Liverpool's" twenty-four-pounders, the place would probably have remained in the possession of the Joassimees.

is about sixty miles in extent. It represents the ancient Oarakhta, where king Erythra is said by Arrian to have been entombed. Several officers in the Indian navy have deavoured to trace the remains of his sepulchre, as yet unsuccessfully. To the honour of these officers it must be conceded, they have done every thing in their power to improve this station of *coup de soleil* in the drought, and to ameliorate the wretched condition of its poor inhabitants. When unassisted by the government, they have erected a racket-court for the amusement of the seamen, and thus given employment to hundreds of Persians from the opposite shore. The danger and misfortune attendant on a three years' cruise in the gulf, it is utterly impossible to imagine, to describe. I could cite very many instances where, "sad and worn," the more intelligent officers have, in consequence of unavoidable exposure to the "hell there," been seized with the gulf fever, which invariably seared their very brains.

caused madness, and proved fatal to them after a few hours. If the allowances of the officers belonging to the Indian navy were granted on a fair estimation of the arduous duties imposed upon them, they would be on a far more liberal scale than they are at present. It is, indeed, sincerely to be hoped that, amongst the many generous measures which the Directors of the Honourable East India Company are carrying into effect, a greater equality in the amount of all allowances will be conceded to the services in India—civil, naval, and military,—than at present prevails; or, at all events, that we shall be paid more in accordance with the nature of the service, and the degree of responsibility exacted of us.

CHAPTER IX.

Coast of Oman—Arabian Tribes—Imaum of Muskat—The Ul-Yezdy Tribe—Sterile Province—Election of a Sheikh—Religious Observances—Slaves in Arabia—Arabs of Oman—Women of Oman—Fish—Harbour of Muskat—Muskat Fruit—Honourable Company's Sloop of War.

CONTINUING our cruise, we passed close along the coast of Oman, the “land of security,” which, according to the best Arabian authorities, comprehends the south-easterly region of Arabia, extending from Cape Ras-al-Hud, on the south, to Zebarah, on the north-eastern coast. This province is divided into two principalities—Rostak and Seer. Muskat is the chief sea-port of the former, and Ras-ul-Khymah, of the latter. It is partitioned also between two Arabian tribes—the Beni-Yemen, and the Beni-Nasir. The sooltaun, or imaum, of Muskat,

is the head of the first, and holds the line of coast from Ras-al-Hud to Mussendom; and the chieftain of the Cassimees or Joassimees, that of the other—his territory extending from Mussendom to Sharga, which constitutes the Seer principality.

The Beni-Yemen consists of six distinct families, of whom the following are the leaders: Syyud Saiad, the sooltaun of Muskat; Azzan of Sohar; Nunneed of Rostak; Nunneed of Simoak; Nunneed of Zaheed; and the Beni Ghafrey tribe, under the chief Mahommed bin Nasir. The most powerful family is the first; and its present representative is, perhaps, the only chieftain in this quarter of the globe who possesses any pretensions to the title of a polished and accomplished gentleman. Unlike other Arabian princes, he seeks to increase his power by the liberal encouragement of commerce among his subjects, rather than by grinding them down, according to the universal usage of the country, with vexatious

and oppressive exactions: and the result, as
will be seen, is that he is the wealth-
iest and most powerful prince throughout
Africa.

Although the character of his highness
is mild and amiable, he is not wanting in
courage, should circumstances imperatively
demand it. When only a beardless boy,
a rebellion was raised against him, headed
by one of his own relatives. Perceiving
that something of a decisive nature was
absolutely necessary, he invited this relative
to an audience, and when the latter had
taken leave, and was in the act of mounting
his horse, the monarch plunged his dagger
deep into the back of the aggressor, in the
very presence of his partisans, which speedily
restored tranquillity.

Whenever he has undertaken expeditions
against his enemies, he has evinced the
greatest courage, leading on his troops, and
exhorting them to deeds of valour both by
precept and example. When the ship of war,

on which he had embarked to enforce the usual tribute from a tribe that had revolted, was boarded by a numerous and powerful enemy, he retired towards the cuddy with a few lascars, and, turning two eighteen-pounders onward, soon cleared the vessel of the intruders, and this, too, when every one had given her up as lost. His first-rates are exceedingly fine vessels: the "Liverpool," "Caroline," and "Shah-Alum," in particular, which were built in India; whilst those which have been constructed at Muttra, within a few miles of Muskat, although less perfectly finished than they would have been in the dock-yard of Bombay, are very good specimens of the talents of the Arabian ship-builders.

Syyud Saiad possesses the "suaviter in modo" in a superlative degree, and is a rigid observer of the forms of the Mahomedan religion: all his adherents speak of him with the affection of children to a parent. He dispenses justice in person;

and takes especial care that the laws shall be impartially administered. When any deserving subject is in distressed circumstances, the sooltaun will lend him a sum of money without exacting any interest whatever. In short, he presents, in every way, such a contrast to all Asiatic rulers, that he is decidedly the greatest "lion" in the east.

Oman was originally peopled from Persia, and subject to that despotic government. The first Arabian tribe that settled there, was the Ul-Yezdy, who emigrated from Nejdjud, and who, on entering Oman, solicited from the Persian governor of the province a grant of land on which he might colonise, but being refused, a furious contest ensued, in which the governor was slain, and the Persians expelled.

The Ul-Yezdy subjugated Oman, and being joined by other tribes from Nejdjud, peopled it, and embraced Islamism in the time of Mahomed. Ali, his son-in-law, also

invaded Oman, and having established an intercourse with the Arab tribes, returned. This visitation laid the foundation of a new sect, and in course of time a new religion, for they embraced that schism which is known under the name of "kherej," or seceders.

The hostility existing between the Muskat Arabs and the Joassimees, is the remnant of that very schism, which is undying, and which often generates even in the most peaceful times the worst of passions, and gives rise in periods of trouble to the worst of crimes.

The face of the whole of this province is mountainous, rugged, and sterile. The wild-est parts of Europe are as nothing in com-parison. Here are vast precipices, for whose summits the eye seeks in vain through the mists and clouds which overhang them ; and rocks piled above each other as if by some powerful giant in his revelry. One might almost suppose the evil genii were confined within them by the resistless signet

of the kaliph Soolimaun: for it requires no great stretch of the imagination to conceive that the rugged grandeur of these stupendous rocks was owing to their convulsive struggles for freedom, and the absence of all vegetation, to the blighting effects of their pestiferous presence.

The interior of the country, however, has many fertile valleys occupied by different tribes, each of which possesses its own castles to retire to in time of war; the chieftain then musters his followers, defends himself to the last, and perpetrates every kind of depredation on his enemies. Hence arise those civil feuds which are of such frequent occurrence throughout Oman.

Each tribe elects its own sheikh, and he chooses from the most powerful clan, a leader to rule the whole, who adopts the name of his own tribe as a nation. The succession to the sheikhship continues hereditary so long only as it may be backed by force; but should the successor ever give his followers any cause to doubt his courage, he would instantly be

deserted by the whole tribe, and a new family chosen.

This coast was also formerly in possession of the Portuguese, who were expelled by the Arabs, and these were again partially subdued by the Persians, in the reign of the great Nadir Shah. The Persians were subsequently driven out by Ahmed-bin-Syyud, governor of Sohar, on which occasion he was elected imauim of Oman.

The tribes, although strict in the outward observances of their religion, never omitting their ablutions and prayers, are not bigoted nor intolerant; and although they cannot have any great regard for strangers professing a different religion to themselves, they hospitably share with them their food, and permit of their using their culinary and other domestic utensils.

Although Syyud Saiad, the present sultaun, has done all in his power to suppress slavery, a great traffic is still carried on between the eastern coast of Africa and Oman, and every family retains two or more slaves of both

sexes. The consideration with which the slaves in this and other parts of Arabia are treated, is quite proverbial, and speaks much in favour of the character of the Arabians, who are the kindest and most considerate of masters. Indeed, slaves are very often advanced to posts of great trust and responsibility; and some of the most valuable ships trading between this coast and India are commanded by slaves, who have always rendered a better account to their masters, as regards their mercantile speculations, cargoes, freightage, &c., than many English commanders that I could name, who have been employed by Arab ship-owners. My residence in Arabia has convinced me that a slave may be perfectly happy; and I feel persuaded, that his condition, when compared with most of the peasantry of Europe, is in every respect the more fortunate of the two.

The natives, although a slender-looking race, have a development of sinew and muscle that cannot be surpassed. Corpulence is unknown amongst them, and old age is much

emaciated. They dress very plainly; the male costume consists of a long white or blue shift, buttoned at the throat, leathern sandals, the keffiah, or headkerchief, and a pair of shulwars. Very little attention is paid to the cultivation of the beard or moustaches, which are invariably short and scanty, and the head is kept closely shorn. The wardrobe of the women consists of the chemise, the kerchief for the head, and a dark mask over the nose*. In contradistinction to the men, they cherish the growth of their coal-black

* "The Arabian women wear black masks with little clasps, prettily ordered." (Carreri). Niebuhr mentions their shewing but one eye in conversation. They also blacken the inside of their eye-lids with the "Kahel," which D'Herbelot thus describes:—"Les Turcs appellent ainsi une poudre faite d'antimoine crud, de laquelle ils se servent pour noircir les sourcils, et même pour en faire un collyre contre le mal aux yeux. Les Arabes l'appellent, Al Cohl, d'où nos chymistes ont fait leur Al Cohl, pour exprimer un elyxir réduit à une poudre extrêmement fine. Le meilleur surmeh de tout l'Orient se fait dans la ville de Hamadan, en Perse. C'est pourquoy l'on donne ordinairement au surmeh le titre de surmeh Hamadani." (D'Herbelot, p. 832).

hair, and fasten it up behind the head. When at Zore, near Cape Ras-al-Hud, with the expedition of 1821, under Sir Lionel Smith, I saw women with their hair at least two feet in length, and with a profusion of ornaments on the ears, nose, and round the neck. Some of them wore gold bangles; but they were much lighter, and far less valuable than those worn by the females of Hindoostaun. They were much addicted to coquetry. The girls in Oman marry at the age of twelve, and look old women by the time they are out of their "teens." Intrigues are not uncommon; and throughout the whole of Oman professed courtesans are to be met with.

The birds found along this coast are of too fishy a flavour to be good eating: the stork, curlew, sand lark, and plover, are among the most common. Fish is also more numerous along the shores than I have elsewhere observed. The grampus and the sword-fish have caused the loss of many small vessels, the latter by splitting up their planks,

and fishermen have actually been cut in twain by these fearful monsters of the deep. Among the great variety of fish, the red rock, seer, and dog-fish, are the commonest; and sea-serpents and sharks are caught with a hook and line, but the mullet and other smaller fish, with the net. The quantity of sardinias taken in one day, has frequently been known to fill half a dozen large boats. The cove of Muskat has long been famed for this delicate little fish, whence it is exported to Mekraun, Sinde, and Western India.

The town is most romantically situated in the south-eastern quarter of this cove, or semi-circular bay, surrounded by steep and barren hills, at a distance of about ninety miles from Cape Ras-al-Hud, in a north-westerly direction. The estimated population is ten thousand. About nine-tenths of this number are Mahomedans; the remainder being Hindoos from Bombay and Guzeraut, who are established here as merchants, and treated with great tolerance. The harbour opens to the

“ wide unbounded sea ” on the north, and is shaped like a horse-shoe. On the south and west, it is bounded by very lofty projecting shores, and on the east, by a ridge of rocks rising to the height of three hundred feet above the level of the sea. The palace and harem of the imaum—

“ Where languid beauty kept her pale-faced court,” stands on the sandy beach, at the south end of the cove, and at about a mile from its mouth.

The depth of water in the harbour is thirty feet; and although the anchorage is not extensive, and exposed to frequent strong northwesters, the holding ground is so good, that ships may ride at single anchor in perfect safety. Strong forts overlook and protect the cove, and vessels are prohibited from entering after nightfall, or weighing before sunrise. I once spent the entire month of August here, in company with my friend, Captain John Parsons, of the royal navy, now in command of H. M. packet “ Sea-

gull;" and I can safely assert that it is the hottest inhabited place in the whole world—the thermometer fluctuated between 95° and 120° during the day, and at night the dew was as subtle and venomous as the cobra's sting.

The Muskat fruit was, however, delicious, especially the dates, which are exported to India in great quantities. A single tree, even, is valued at ten dollars, and its annual produce varies from a dollar to a dollar and a half. Estates are here estimated according to the number of date-trees they may possess. Niebuhr thinks that Muskat occupies the site of the Mosca of Arrian and other Greek writers*. Vincent, however, though he speaks doubtfully on the subject, is inclined to place Mosca to the westward of Cape Ras-al-Hud.

We sighted the high land off Zore; and, after a rapid and pleasant passage across

* *Voyage en Arabie*, Vol. ii. p. 71, ed. Amst. 1780.

the Indian Ocean, anchored, towards the close of the year, in the magnificent harbour of Bombay, where

“——the slim canoe
Of feather'd Indian, darts about as through
The delicatest air.”

Our cruise in the “Amherst” proved a source of much gratification to us, for there is always something about a man-of-war singularly spirit-stirring. Every thing was in the highest possible order, and the crew were daily exercised at the great guns and small arms. The cheerful obedience and extreme agility of the Lascars, and the consequent absence of all strong measures of coercion, were particularly striking. We really felt very sorry when our cruise ended, and shall ever entertain the liveliest sense of gratitude for the kindness and attention that we received from Captain Wyndham, Lieutenant Poole*, and the rest of the officers

* Since I left Persia, both these officers have fallen victims to fever, while cruising off the Arabian shore

on board the Honourable East India Company's sloop of war "Amherst."

of the Persian Gulf. In life, they were deservedly beloved by all their brother officers, and in death are most sincerely lamented.

CHAPTER X.

Expedition to Arabia—The Camp Attacked—Pursuit—Rescue—Ferocious Onset—Death of Captain Parr—His Funeral—Sir George Cox—Our dead Comrades—Barbarous Outrage—Arrival of the Imaum—Captain Thompson's Detachment—Attack on Beni-boo-Ali—Sortie of the Enemy—Their Determined Daring—Fall of Beni-boo-Ali—Killed and Wounded—Return to Zore.

As Zore is a place well known for being the rendezvous of the vessels which conveyed the third expedition from Bombay to the coast of Arabia, and as I was present with that expedition, I may be excused for introducing in this part of my work a brief outline of our operations on that occasion. The force, to the number of two thousand seven hundred men, under the command of General Sir Lionel Smith, (an officer who by his gallantry and services, had already established a high professional character), were embarked on board sixteen transports,

and eleven bughaliks, (these last containing the horses of the mounted branch of the force), and left Bombay harbour on the morning of the 11th of January, 1821, under convoy of the East India Company's brig of war "Vestal," commanded by Lieutenant Robinson, of the Indian navy. After a tedious passage of seventeen days across the Indian Ocean, the ships, swarming with red-coats, came to an anchor near Cape Ras-al-Hud; and, on the morning of the 29th, after considerable difficulty and danger, the boats made way through the surf, and landed the troops with their knapsacks, haversacks, great coats, and well-filled pouches on their backs. The force took up a position near the hamlet of Zore, about four miles distant from the place of disembarkation.

We continued to occupy this position for the space of thirteen days without hearing any thing of our enemies, when, towards midnight of the 11th of February, the camp was

suddenly attacked by six hundred Arabs of the Beni-boo-Ali tribe. This daring band approached our position through an irregular and winding valley, thickly planted with date trees, and situated directly beneath the left flank picket, which was surprised, and compelled to retire upon the camp, being closely pressed by the shouting and ferocious enemy, who were intoxicated with their success.

The Bombay European regiment* to

* The ceremony of presenting new colours to this old (the " primus in Indis ") and distinguished regiment, recently took place in presence of the whole of the Poonah brigade. The governor of Bombay, his excellency the commander-in-chief, and all the general and division staff, honoured the corps with their presence.

The regiment, full seven hundred strong, and in the highest state of discipline and equipment, was formed into close columns of wings facing inwards, and the space between the two centre companies became the arena for the ceremony. The commanding officer, Lieutenant-colonel Wood, placed the colours on a large drum, and, with the two ensigns upon whom the honour of bearing the colours devolved, awaited the approach

which I have the honour to belong, and in which corps I then also served, was encamped on the extreme left of the line, and the enemy succeeded in getting into the rear

of the Earl of Clare, which was announced by a salute of nineteen guns from the horse artillery, and by a general salute from the whole brigade. After the military chaplain had delivered a short prayer appropriate to the occasion, the governor received the colours from Lieutenant-colonel Wood, and addressed the regiment in the following terms:—

“ It has fallen to my lot (I can assure you all, a more agreeable duty could not have been imposed on me), this day to present you your new colours; and I must crave your indulgence for a short time, in order that I may make a few remarks on your old colours, now about to be furled, and on the new colours which I shall present to the regiment.

“ I believe I am quite correct in stating, that I address the oldest regiment in the service of the East India Company. Its origin may be dated from certain independant companies sent out to this country by king Charles the Second, about the middle of the seventeenth century, to garrison the fort and island of Bombay, then ceded to us by the king of Portugal. At what period these companies were embodied into one corps, does not exactly appear; but the honours you have gained since that time, at the glorious siege of Seringapatam,

of the men's lines, and appeared amongst our marques before the regiment had time to fall in. There was consequently some little confusion. Several marine officers belonging

on the victorious field of Kirkee, and against the Arabs in the Persian Gulf, at Beni-boo-Ali, are too remarkable for me to pass by in silence.

“ Who has not heard of Serjeant Graham, of the Bombay European regiment, that first planted the British Union on the ramparts of Seringapatam? What soldier is there whose heart does not beat high when he reflects on the renown which that brave man shed on his corps, who met his fate in the moment of victory, and almost with his last breath shouted, ‘ Hurrah! Lieutenant Graham! ’ I am no soldier; but, as an Englishman, I should be really ashamed to confess that I did not feel exultation when I call to mind his gallant conduct. To you all I say it, and I say it with perfect truth, there are, at this moment, many Serjeant Grahams in the Bombay European regiment.

“ In alluding to the capture of Seringapatam, for which the hero of that glorious day, the late lamented Sir David Baird, and the gallant force serving under him, received the well-deserved thanks of a British Parliament and of the Court of Directors, I feel confident it cannot fail also to be a source of gratification to the regiment, that it there served in company of the Duke of Wellington, with that unrivalled Captain, in whose praise no tongue is silent—who has wreathed

to the transports, who had been spending a few days on shore with their military friends, were seen scampering from their tents towards our regimental lines in a state

about the sword of England laurels as unfading as those which encircled her trident. Though to Europe we must look as the later theatre of his exertions, the more memorable witness of his fame, still it must always be remembered, that, in this country, your regiment witnessed the commencement of his glorious career, which, after a series of triumphs unparalleled in the annals of the world, was at last closed on the field of Waterloo, until a new war shall again call him forth to lead the British armies to conquest.

“ From these subjects of exultation to the regiment at the close of the last century, I turn to your glorious achievements at the battle of Kirkee. The circumstances of that memorable day are too fresh in the recollection of every one to make it necessary for me particularly to allude to them. On that hill stood the faithless ally, the perfidious prince, who, confident in his vain gods and in the number of his undisciplined troops, there witnessed the downfall of his empire and the triumph of the British army. Well and bravely did the Bombay European regiment on that day earn for itself the additional honour it has since borne; for at no former period were the devoted gallantry of the British army and the incorruptible fidelity of our brave sepoyes more conspicuous. I pass onward from the general pacification

of nudity, and amongst them I saw a young cadet, who had been recently posted to the corps, running for his life *en chemise*, closely pursued by an athletic Arab, pushing him on

of this country in 1818, to the year 1821, when the Bombay European regiment was again employed in active service, under the orders of Sir Lionel Smith, against the Arabs in the Persian Gulf, when you entered their capital in triumph, and by your prowess added to your former honours. In whatever quarter you have been engaged, I find the gallantry and good conduct of the Bombay regiment equally remarkable. Wherever you have been present, I find you have invariably increased your reputation. Bear witness, Seringapatam! bear witness, the field of Kirkee! bear witness, Beni-boo-Ali! on your colours; and let me assure you, that I feel confident, in the event of another war, you will add to all these honours.

“I now present to you your colours. Into braver and safer hands than the hands of the officers of the Bombay European regiment, I cannot commit British colours. To you I say it, and I would that every one now present could hear me: under these colours, in the righteous cause of your country, the Bombay European regiment will ever fight its way to victory.”

His lordship having presented the colours to the ensigns, the regiment broke into column, and the whole brigade having marched passed his lordship in

at the *pas de charge* with a sharp-pointed spear, when, luckily for the cadet, both were met by one of our grenadier company's privates, who had come "to the rescue." At this critical moment, he called out to the young officer, " Fall flat on your face, Sir ! " and, pulling the trigger of his fire-lock, sent a ball clean through the breast of the courageous stranger, who fell dead at the cadet's feet. He was a tall, gaunt, and sinewy figure, of about thirty ; and, though almost fleshless, his square shoulders and review order, concluded this exciting and interesting ceremony.

In the evening a ball was given by the officers of the regiment to the Earl of Clare, Sir Colin and Lady Halkett, and all the fashionables of Poonah. The dancing was kept up with spirit until past midnight, when the company passed from the ball-room to a magnificent suite of tents, where they partook of a splendid supper, at which there was every European as well as Eastern delicacy to gratify the palate. After supper, the dance was resumed, and continued until an early hour in the morning, when the company retired, with a deep sense of the hospitality, kindness, and attention they had received from Lieutenant-colonel Wood and all the officers of the Bombay European regiment.

well-knit joints shewed him to be a most powerful man. Several of our finest fellows were cut down on the moment of their appearing at the opening of their tents, where the Arabs had been awaiting their egress sword in hand.

The marquee which I occupied with my comrades, H. and Le B., had been pitched on the extreme left of the subalterns' lines, and was the most exposed of any throughout the whole camp, as the enemy approached "broad on our weather beam." I was suddenly aroused from my slumbers, by the sound of a ferocious and demoniac shouting, which speedily became more and more distinct:

"———I seem'd to hear
Sounds gathering upwards, accents incomplete,
And stifled shrieks; and now, more near and near,
A tumult and a rush of thronging feet."

No lamp was burning in the tent, but the moon shed a soft and partial reflection of light around it, which enabled me to discover that my companions had quitted their quarters *breechesless*—they had forgotten

to carry away with them their unmentionables. Starting from the ground, I rushed to the door, and observed about a hundred "children of the Desert" capering towards my tent, brandishing their long straight swords and spears with which they were armed. I seized my pistols from beneath a pormanteau which had formed my pillow, and, cocking them, proceeded to dress myself as quickly as I possibly could. Whilst doing this, a strong party of Arabs surrounded and looked in at my *enviable* position, but they did not appear willing to keep me company. Although I pretended to take no notice of these unwelcome visitors, I must confess, I felt my situation at that critical moment by no means comfortable. They then pierced the tent throughout with their sharp-pointed spears, and wounded my servant, who was sleeping "fast as a watchman" close to the canvass wall.

When I had buckled on my sword, the drums beat to quarters, so I left my *safe* billet *sans touche*, and made the best

of my way to the lines, near which I found our fine old corps, which bears the sobriquet of the "Toughs," and several companies of the seventh regiment native infantry hard at their morning's work, firing away at the enemy right and left, before the troops occupying the other end of the lines had even fallen in. Our thick-flying musketry soon compelled the Arabs to retire beneath the cover of their date grove, closely pursued by our light company, under Lieutenants Taylor and Stewart, who had some very sharp work.

The loss of life on this memorable night, fell heavy upon us. During the first *mélée* of this nocturnal onset, the brave Captain Parr, commanding our grenadier company, fell, after having received eighteen frightful wounds—his head was nearly severed from the body, and his backbone cut in two. Some of our officers saw him come out of his tent, and, on meeting him, he said, "The regiment must be turned out;" when they replied, "Do not go in that di-

rection, Parr; the Arabs are very numerous there." He then rejoined, "It does not signify; the regiment must be formed." In the prosecution of that endeavour, he encountered seven of the enemy single-handed, and, after having gallantly but vainly contended against them, fell a sacrifice to his zeal for the credit of his regiment. He lingered nearly two hours in great agony, and died most deeply regretted by us all.

His funeral was the most soul-exciting of the very many I have witnessed. The sword he had so bravely wielded, and held even after his death-wound, was laid on his coffin. The band of the European regiment and the muffled drums led the sad procession, while a long array of mourners followed, mixing the rare accompaniments of gaudy display and real grief. As the procession glided along the rocky path, the very sea seemed listening; and, when "earth to earth, dust to dust," had been solemnly uttered, and the volleys which paid the last honour to the dead, and

started the lonely sea-gull, had been fired, the remains of this hero were left to rest beneath the solitary wastes of Oman!

Our commanding officer, the late Colonel Sir George Cox, Bart., who had been appointed to command the second brigade, received four very severe wounds—one a deep cut across his face and lips, a spear wound in the back, a sword wound in the shoulder, and another on the thigh. Sir George had engaged three Arabs at once; and, when unable to defend himself longer from loss of blood, Captain McKellar, of the transport “Lushington,” who had been spending the day on shore, most opportunely appeared, and succeeded in driving off the enemy, notwithstanding he was *hard screwed* at the time. Captains Watkins and Burnett were also wounded, together with three and twenty men, besides nineteen killed.

With the exception of Major Maw, who was in charge of the regiment, and Adjutant Meriton, we all lost our horses—the Arabs had cruelly hamstrung them; mine was

actually severed in half. No compensation whatever was allowed us for this severe loss, sustained under unparalleled hardships, and on the field. The attack was led by sheikh Kadim-bin-Ali, the brother of Mahommed-bin-Ali, chief of the Beni-boo-Ali tribe, who was also present, and who, during the engagement, received a gun-shot wound in the arm.

On the following morning, the soldiers were brought out of the hospital tents, "lying in death," and stretched at length on the sand. Oh, what a sight it was! the wounds were of the severest kind, from the close quarters the contending parties chose for themselves. Sir Lionel Smith rode through the lines, accompanied by his staff, and had the pain of witnessing the interment of our unfortunate comrades.

The horses, maddened with pain, were shrieking aloud amidst the groans of the wounded, until our pistols put an end to their sufferings. We burnt twenty, (the officers of my regiment, including my own,

alone had lost that number); this was the most ready way of getting rid of them, in the absence of carts for their removal, as, under the blaze of an Arabian sun, their carcases would, in the briefest period, have proved intolerably offensive to the sight and smell. I shall never forget the shuddering sensation of horror I felt at the sight of some of these frightful gashes. It was much worse than if double the number of horses had been perforated with musket balls, or slain without these *coups de grâce à l'Arabe*. Only fifteen of the enemy were killed, and about a dozen of them wounded.

We now took especial care to guard against a repetition of these awful results, in the event of a second attack being made, by strengthening our pickets, and pitching as closely and as compactly to one another as possible; and, when this had been effected, we laid so snug, that the camp occupied scarcely half the ground it had previously done. Had the enemy on his approach only preserved a strict silence, he might have

annihilated the whole of the left brigade. Ever after this, we slept with our arms in readiness, and the sentries of our picquets kept a sharp look-out.

By the 21st of the month, his highness the imam of Muskat had arrived with cattle for transporting our provisions and ammunition. He was accompanied by about a thousand men, and nearly as many camels. These were few enough, when it is remembered that the stores for the maintenance of the whole force during its absence from the sea coast, until its return, were to be conveyed through a desert, in which we could procure no supplies whatever.

On the 1st of March, we bivouacked at Beni-boo-Hassan, where we left all our heavy stores, and took up a position before Beni-boo-Ali on the following day; the distance marched from Zore being fifty-five miles. On first seeing Beni-boo-Ali *à la distance*, we crossed the ground on which the massacre of Captain Thompson's detachment took place, and which frightful slaugh-

ter led to the sending up our present expedition. It may, however, be as well to state here what brought that officer in contact with these Arabs.

When the Wahabees visited this part of Oman, the Beni-boo-Ali tribe renounced the pure faith of Islam to join these sectarians, and having repaired and fortified their village, they sent marauding parties out in all directions. His highness the imaum of Muskat used every endeavour to put them down; and, being unsuccessful, applied to Captain Thompson, of H. M. 17th regiment of light dragoons, who commanded a small military detachment then stationed on the island of Kishun, and who, considering the above tribe in the light of pirates, and his orders enjoining him to suppress piracy by every means in his power, lost no time in proceeding to Zore, and from thence soon reached the vicinity of Boo-Ali, where he was suddenly attacked, and his detachment annihilated. Thompson and Lieutenant Boswell, of the second regiment of

Bombay native infantry, were the only officers that escaped. Our advance over the skeletons of our brother officers, which lay bleaching beneath our very feet, made an impression on me, of which the sorrowful effect will not be readily obliterated.

We soon gained an eminence which commanded a view of the works of Beni-boo-Ali. The enemy instantly saluted us with cannon-shot which they had *borrowed* from us before, and killed a corporal of our corps. We opened a couple of howitzers for the purpose of returning the compliment, but soon found the distance too great ; and were obliged to advance about a mile and a quarter, when we halted ; we could not encamp, for we had not a single tent with us ; even Sir Lionel Smith had no tent, but was obliged to *rough it*, and to draw the same rations as were served out to the men.

We now occupied a date grove, and threw picquets forward ; the rest of the division was assembled behind some low calcareous hills in contiguous columns of companies, at

tack, declared that more determined bravery was never displayed by troops of any nation. Not only were they unchecked in their advance in the very face of repeated discharges of grape, which slew them in multitudes, but, scorning the line of bayonets opposed to them, they made a fair stand-up fight of it—threw themselves upon our corps, seized our firelocks with both hands to break through our ranks, and cut down our men after we had pierced their bodies with the bayonet. All our own men that fell were slain with their long, straight, double-edged swords, the matchlock being scarcely used during the attack ; and though the sepoys were out-flanked, broken, and pushed hard by this impetuous charge, they never evinced the slightest disposition to disperse or to retreat.

The right brigade was now ordered to fall back, to give place to the left, whilst the wounded were carried to the rear. Our regiment moved forward, and filed along under cover of the outer wall of the fort: we

soon silenced the enemy's fire, and took possession of his bastions. This was the last effort made by the tribe for the defence of their families,—a loud wailing was heard from the women, who shouted out “Aman,” meaning quarter, or safe conduct. Two women came out, bearing a white flag, and declared the fort was ours. Sir Lionel said he would grant them five minutes, to decide whether they would surrender unarmed. To these terms there was some hesitation, and many of the enemy were seen scudding away by the back of the inner fort: the guns then opened to breach the wall, and the sixty-fifth regiment moved up at the double march to prevent the escape of the Arabs. The flag of truce was again displayed from the ramparts, and the general immediately ordered a cessation of all acts of hostility. The women were permitted to escape, and, when some officers went into the fort, the men laid down their arms. As the silken flags of the sixty-fifth and our regiment were flying over the walls, our men waved their little white

foraging caps in the air,—and thus fell Beni-boo-Ali!

Two hundred and thirty-five of the enemy were lying dead on the field, and amongst these were several women; but his highness the imaum declared that upwards of five hundred had fallen on this occasion. We lost twenty-six killed, and one hundred and seventy-one wounded. Two hundred and seventy prisoners were taken and had their wounds dressed; but they refused to submit to amputation, all of them preferring death to being disabled. Both the chiefs were most severely wounded; the youngest had two balls in his legs, and appeared to suffer the greatest pain. He subsequently died; but all the prisoners were taken to Bombay, where every attention was paid them, and, after a short confinement, they were permitted to return to their native country.

On the night of the 6th, the women retired to the desert, and Beni-boo-Ali was destroyed, together with all those stores we had no means of taking back with us to Zore.

During this operation the prisoners thought they also were to be included, and some actually inquired, if their time was near at hand. These wretched captives were constantly in a state bordering on madness, which was fostered by their utter hopelessness of eventual liberation: they actually courted death at our hands, beseeching us to stab them with our swords, and thus to free them of their existence.

We left Beni-boo-Ali to return to Zore on the 7th of March, and experienced the greatest difficulty in conveying away our wounded, all of whom were great sufferers. By the 12th, we had encamped near the sea coast, and, the weather being propitious and the wind as fair as if bespoken, we immediately commenced our embarkation for the shores of Western India.

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APPENDIX.

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APPENDIX.

Note I. *Page 226.*

THE despatch received in India from the Major-general, commanding the expedition to Ras-ul-Khymah, was to the following effect:—

“ I have the satisfaction to report the town of Ras-ul-Khymah, after a resistance of six days, was taken possession of this morning by the force under my command. Previous to making you acquainted with the circumstances which led to this fortunate result, I shall do myself the honour briefly to detail the events which occurred between the period of my last communication and the commencement of the operations before Ras-ul-Khymah.

“ On the 18th ult., after completing my arrangements at Muscat, the ‘ Liverpool’ sailed for the rendezvous at Kishm; on the 21st, we fell in with the fleet off the Persian coast, and anchored off the island of Larrack on the 24th of November.

“ As it appeared probable that a considerable period would elapse before the junction of the ships, which were detained at Bombay, I conceived it would prove highly advantageous to avail myself of that interval, in acquiring as accurate a knowledge of the strength and defences of Ras-ul-Khymah as personal observation could supply, and I gladly embraced the proposal of Captain Collier, that the ‘ Liverpool’ should proceed thither for that purpose. The senior engineer was accordingly taken on board; and, having sailed from Larrack on the morning of the 25th, we anchored off Ras-ul-Khymah on the 27th. The place was closely and repeatedly reconnoitered, and the weather continuing favourable for our operations, I determined to order down the troops, and commence the attack without waiting for the rear transports, as the season of the north-west winds was rapidly approaching, and Captain Collier appeared apprehensive that a further delay might prove detrimental to the enterprise. A vessel was, therefore, despatched with instructions to Captain Walpole, who was left in charge of the fleet, and on the 2nd instant, the transports arrived under convoy of the ‘ Curlew.’

“ No time was lost in making the necessary preparations for landing, which was effected the

following morning without opposition, at a spot which had been previously selected for that purpose, about two miles to the southward of the town. The troops were formed across the isthmus connecting the peninsula, on which the town is situated, with the neighbouring country, and the whole day was occupied in getting tents on shore, to shelter the men from the rain, landing engineers' tools, sand-bags, &c., and making arrangements preparatory to commencing our approaches the next day. On the morning of the 4th, the light troops were ordered in advance, supported by the picquets, to dislodge the enemy from a bank within nine hundred yards of the outer fort, which was expected to afford good cover for the men, and to serve as a dépôt for stores, previous to the erection of the batteries. The whole of the light companies of the force, under command of Captain Backhouse, of his Majesty's forty-seventh regiment, accordingly moved forward, and drove the Arabs with great gallantry from a date grove, and over the bank above described, close under the walls of the fort, followed by the picquets under Major Molesworth, who took post at the sand-bank, whilst the European light troops were skirmishing in front. The enemy kept up a sharp fire of musketry and cannon during these movements; and

I regret to add, that Major Molesworth, a gallant and zealous officer, was killed by a cannon shot at the head of the picquets. Lieutenant Stepney, of the sixty-fifth, was wounded on this occasion. The troops, however, maintained their position during the day, and in the night effected a lodgment within three hundred yards of the southern-most tower, and erected a battery for four guns, together with a mortar battery, on the right, and a trench of communication for the protection of the covering party.

“ The weather having become rather unfavourable for the disembarkation of the stores required for the siege, it was with considerable difficulty that this primary object was effected; but every obstacle was surmounted by the zeal and indefatigable exertions of the navy, and on the morning of the 6th, we were enabled to open three eighteen-pounders on the fort; a couple of howitzers and six-pounders were also placed in the battery on the right, which played on the defences of the towers, and nearly silenced the enemy’s fire. The ‘Liverpool,’ during these operations, warped in as close to the shore as her draught of water would permit, and opened her guns on the town, which must have created considerable alarm in the garrison, but she was unfortunately at too great a dis-

tance to produce any decided effect. The enemy, who during the whole of our progress exhibited a considerable degree of resolution in withstanding, and ingenuity in counteracting our attacks, sallied forth at eight o'clock this evening along the whole front of our intrenchments, crept close up to the mortar battery without being perceived, and entered it over the parapet, after spearing the advanced sentries. The party which occupied it was obliged to retire, but being immediately reinforced, charged the assailants, who were driven out of the battery with considerable loss. The attack on the left was repelled instantaneously by the spirited resistance of the covering party under Major Warren, who distinguished himself much on this occasion by his coolness and gallantry. The enemy repeated his attacks towards morning, but was vigorously repulsed. During the 7th, every exertion was made to land and bring up the remaining guns and mortars, which was accomplished during the night, after incessant labour by the sailors, assisted by working parties from the troops, and those of his highness the imauum, who cheerfully volunteered their services. They were immediately placed in battery, together with two twenty-four-pounders, which were landed from the 'Liverpool,' and in the morning the whole of

our ordnance opened on the fort, and fired with scarcely any intermission till sunset, when the breach on the curtain was rendered nearly practicable, and the towers almost untenable. Immediate arrangements were made for the assault, and the troops ordered to move down to the trenches at daybreak the next morning. The bombardment continued during the night, and the batteries, having recommenced their fire before day-light, completed the breaches by eight o'clock. The accompanying orders will explain to his Excellency the dispositions of attack, as well as the measures taken to guard against the possibility of a failure, in the event of the enemy defending himself as desperately as might have been expected from his previous defence. These precautions, however, were unnecessary: the party moved forward about eight o'clock, and entered the fort, through the breaches, without firing a shot; and it soon appeared that the enemy had evacuated the place. The town was taken possession of, and found almost entirely deserted: only eighteen or twenty men, and a few women, remained in their houses. Upon the whole, it appears evident, considering the spirited behaviour of the enemy at the commencement of the siege, that their sudden resolution to evacuate the place

was occasioned by the overwhelming fire of the artillery, of which they could have formed no previous idea, and which the ample means, placed at my disposal, enabled me to bring against the town.

"Our loss, I am happy to say, is much less than could have been expected, from the length of the siege, and the obstinacy with which the enemy disputed our approaches. I have had no means of ascertaining theirs, but it must have been severe.

"I beg you will assure his Excellency, that I feel entirely satisfied with the conduct of the troops; their gallantry has been exceeded only by their patience and cheerfulness under every species of privation and fatigue; and the peculiarity of this service has called forth a full display of these qualities, which are equally creditable to the soldier as the most intrepid acts of bravery. By the orders which I do myself the honour to inclose, his Excellency will be enabled to estimate the services performed by Captain Collier and the naval part of the expedition; and I can only add, that the acknowledgments therein expressed are scarcely adequate to the assistance I have received from them.

(Signed) "W. GRANT KEIR,
"Major-general."

"Camp, Ras-ul-Khymah, 9th Dec. 1819."

Note II. *Page 271.*

“ TO HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUT.-GEN. SIR C. COLVILLE,
G. C. B., COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, &c. BOMBAY.

“ SIR,—I have great pleasure in reporting to your Excellency, that the division which the government did me the honour to place under my orders for service, against the tribe of Beni-boo-Ali, having arrived before his capital yesterday morning, succeeded in repulsing a very spirited attack of the enemy, and in gaining complete possession of his whole fortified position before sunset in the evening.

“ The principal action fell on the right brigade under Lieutenant-colonel Warren, of his Majesty's sixty-fifth regiment, with about four hundred rank and file of that regiment, and about three hundred of the first battalion of the seventh native infantry, which has, I am very sorry to say, sustained a very heavy loss.

“ The enemy left upwards of two hundred men killed in the field: and reckoning those they carried off, and those who fell in the subsequent at-

tack of the citadel, I cannot calculate his total loss at less than five hundred killed and wounded.

“ There are also two hundred and thirty-six prisoners who bore arms, of whom ninety-six are wounded, and the families amount to upwards of one thousand individuals; so, I trust, I can assure your Excellency the tribe is effectually put down. The two principal chiefs of the tribe are also prisoners, both badly wounded; one in the attack on our camp at Zore, on the 10th ult., and the other in the action of yesterday.

“ The enemy evinced the most determined gallantry, but he received such a destructive fire, it was impossible he could maintain his attack long: I calculate the number he brought into action at about 1,000 men.

“ All the guns which he gained possession of from Captain Thompson’s detachment are recovered, and in good order.

“ I beg to inclose your Excellency a list of the killed and wounded, and a plan of the fort and environs of Boo-Ali, shewing the whole operations of the day, which were most laborious.

“ I also inclose a copy of the orders issued to the division, whose conduct I cannot sufficiently praise to your Excellency. I have been under great obligations to the heads of departments, and other

officers, who have earned the record of my acknowledgments; and I beg to draw your Excellency's favourable notice to their high deserts.

“ The service, though short, has been very arduous. The natural difficulties of the country, which afforded no supplies whatever, and my little means of carriage, imposed the necessity of reduced rations, and very limited camp equipage to all ranks, under the severest exposure of heat and thirst. The troops endured all their difficulties with the most becoming patience and confidence, and I can assure your Excellency they have well supported the reputation of the Bombay army.

“ This despatch will be delivered to your Excellency by my aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Place, of his Majesty's sixty-fifth regiment: an old subaltern, who has long been on my staff, and who deserves my warmest recommendation to your Excellency's notice.

“ I have the honour, &c.

(Signed)

“ LIONEL SMITH,

“ Major-general.”

“ *Camp, Beni-boo-Ali, March 3, 1831.*”

DIVISION ORDERS BY MAJOR-GENERAL SMITH, C. B.

“ Major-general Smith avails himself of the first leisure moment he has had to convey to all the division his acknowledgment of their important services against Beni-boo-Ali.

“ Lieutenant-colonel Leighton, second in command, is requested to accept the Major-general's thanks for the cordial assistance he has afforded him on all occasions, particularly in the personal command of the left brigade.

“ The Major-general also desires to express his thanks and applause to Lieutenant-colonel Warren, of his Majesty's sixty-fifth regiment, for the gallant exertions of his brigade, in repulsing the very spirited attack of the enemy with his whole force yesterday, which was followed by the immediate occupation of the strong defences on his right, and hastened his total submission in the evening.

“ Captain Stewart, commanding the first battalion of the seventh, and Lieutenant and Adjutant Thurnham, of the same battalion, particularly distinguished themselves on this occasion.

“ Throughout this short but very arduous service, from the nature of the country and climate, the

troops have endured more than common privations and difficulties with the most praiseworthy perseverance and cheerful confidence, and the Major-general will be able to give testimony to his Excellency the commander-in-chief, that they have eminently upheld the high character of the Bombay army.

“ The Major-general cannot close these acknowledgments without expressing his best thanks to Major Jackson, of his Majesty’s carbineers, his military secretary, for the benefit of his exertions in the field yesterday, and on all occasions when he could apply his zeal and assistance.

“ His most sincere thanks are also offered to Major Stannus, the assistant-adjutant-general; Captain Wilson, the assistant-quarter-master-general; and Captain Keith, the assistant-commissary-general; and he will not fail to bring to the notice of the commander-in-chief, the indefatigable devotion with which those officers discharged the duties of their departments.

“ The Major-general owes it to Major Mackintosh, and the officers and detachment of artillery, to offer them his thanks for their valuable services. By that officer’s able arrangement, under the most discouraging difficulties of roads and means, the division was provided with two horse brigades of

twelve-pounders, which secured the early success of our operations against the principal fort.

" The Major-general also derived the greatest benefit from the ability and judgment with which Captain Dickinson suggested the direction of the artillery against the fort, and he begs that officer will receive his best thanks and applause.

" Lieutenant Robinson, of the Honourable Company's marines, and the volunteer seamen from the fleet off Zore, rendered the division great service, and underwent the most trying labour and fatigue in dragging heavy guns. Major-general Smith, requests Lieutenant Robinson will accept and communicate his best thanks, and he will express to government how much he is indebted to that officer for his useful exertions.

(Signed) " E. G. STANNUS,
 " A. A. G."

" *Camp, Beni-boo-ah, March 3, 1821.*"

THE END.

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